

Asian currencies fall as stocks tumble in China



How Team Philippines won in Hong Kong's Gourmet Team Challenge

Pampanga barangay leaders hide, fear reprisal from losers

Bush trade chief to replace Wolfowitz at World Bank



New fitness machines use vibrations to tone muscle



CHICAGO—WHAT IF you could burn fat while shaking a martini? Actually, it is your body that shakes like a martini on a new type of fitness machine that is generating lots of buzz and celebrity use. Even

NEW/A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, May 31, 2007

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website: www.inquirer.net

RP, Australia to sign military accord today

By Michael Lim Ubac

CANBERRA (VIA PLDT)—PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO arrived here in the Australian capital before nightfall yesterday for a two-day state visit aimed at increasing security cooperation between Australia and the Philippines against transnational crimes and terrorism.

The signing of the Status of Forces Agreement

RP, AUSTRALIA/A8

Defensor concedes loss

TU senatorial candidate wants to ease tension on the ground

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S EX-CHIEF OF STAFF yesterday conceded defeat in the senatorial elections, saying he wanted to ease the prevailing tension and to prevent possible "inimical acts" to get him into the winning circle.

Michael Defensor, a candidate of the administration's Team Unity (TU) and widely believed to have been Ms Arroyo's favorite Cabinet official, called a press conference at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City to make the announcement. He was accompanied by his wife Julie Rose, who occasionally wiped away tears as he spoke, and their four children.

"I concede to ease the tension on the ground and dismiss any notion that there may be illegal acts committed to attain my victory," said a sad-faced Defensor.

"I concede so as to enjoin my allies and friends who may want, in their desire to have me win, commit acts inimical to the essence of democracy and fair play in an electoral battle. I concede because I love my family and I want my children to learn that there is honor in defeat."

"I concede. May peace and serenity prevail."

It was 8-2-2 in favor of the Genuine Opposition (GO) in the latest count of the Commission on Elections, with Edgardo Angara and Joker Arroyo as the only TU candidates making a consistent showing in the top 10.

Defensor was No. 15—three slots out of the winning circle. It appeared that he was not as optimistic about his chances as three other TU candidates, Juan Miguel Zubiri (No. 13), Ralph Recto (No. 14) and Prospero Pichay (No. 16), who had earlier asked the Comelec for a recount of votes in 31 cities and provinces.

Defensor made his announcement a day after all 11 GO candidates issued a manifesto claiming massive fraud and warning the Arroyo administration of a

DEFENSOR/A6



"THERE IS HONOR IN DEFEAT," Michael Defensor, accompanied by his wife and children, says in a press conference in Quezon City.

JOAN BONDAG

Sarmiento says he won't quit as commissioner



AFTER three days at sick bay, Elections Commissioner Rene Sarmiento (third, from left) is welcomed by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and other officials.

By Nikko Dizon

HANDLING THE SPECIAL ELECTIONS in Lanao del Sur had added to his gray hairs and taken a toll on his health, but Election Commissioner Rene Sarmiento yesterday spurned calls for him to resign.

Sarmiento also declared that the controversial bundle of blank election returns (ERs) brought to his hotel the night before the Lanao polls was never used for mischief.

He also stood by a fellow Comelec lawyer, Jubiel Sumieda (not Jubil Sumieda, as earlier reported), who had been associated with disgraced former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcilano.

Sumieda had come under fire from

media for transferring the blank returns from the provincial treasurer's office in Lanao to an Iligan City hotel, where Sarmiento and his staff were staying, reportedly for safekeeping.

"No, I will not resign. My heart and soul are in the commission," the 53-year-old Sarmiento said at a news conference.

Referring to the ERs, he said: "There was nothing fraudulent about the ERs ... They were all clean." Sarmiento returned yesterday to his duties as a member of the National Board of Canvassers tabulating the senatorial tallies after a five-day mission to supervise the Lanao special elections.

Sarmiento said it was his duty to stand by his staff "through thick or

SARMIENTO/A6

ELEKSYON 2007			
COMELEC		NAMEREL	
From 61 provinces and 14 Metro Manila CoCs As of 5 p.m., May 30, 2007		189,064 out of 224,748 precincts As of 10:31 p.m., May 30, 2007	
1 LEGARDA	16,827,874	1 LEGARDA	14,690,237
2 ESCUDERO	16,663,765	2 ESCUDERO	14,450,725
3 LACSON	14,106,712	3 LACSON	12,462,226
4 VILLAR	14,000,873	4 VILLAR	12,120,802
5 PANGILINAN	13,340,850	5 AQUINO	11,574,179
6 AQUINO	13,114,453	6 PANGILINAN	11,534,924
7 ANGARA	11,307,588	7 ANGARA	10,050,647
8 ARROYO	10,748,598	8 CAYETANO, A.	9,371,247
9 CAYETANO, A.	10,697,784	9 ARROYO	9,329,270
10 HONASAN	10,418,705	10 HONASAN	9,326,932
11 TRILLANES	10,012,648	11 TRILLANES	9,031,507
12 PIMENTEL	9,862,979	12 PIMENTEL	8,758,783
13 ZUBIRI	9,764,090	13 ZUBIRI	8,545,787
14 RECTO	9,650,727	14 RECTO	8,289,884
15 DEFENSOR	8,979,985	15 DEFENSOR	7,821,987
16 PICHAY	8,751,967	16 PICHAY	7,656,949
17 ROCCO	7,741,880	17 ROCCO	5,828,471
18 MONTANO	6,970,122	18 MONTANO	6,201,134
19 SOTTO	6,785,350	19 OSMEÑA	5,930,131
20 OSMEÑA	6,533,755	20 SOTTO	5,809,705

4 MAGUINDANAO/A8

4 Maguindanao teachers narrate poll cheating

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE FOUR SCHOOL TEACHERS begged media people not to print their names or take their pictures, saying they feared not only for their lives but for those of their families.

The four teachers had reasons to be frightened, having one common story to tell: The May 14 elections in Pagalungan, Maguindanao, were the "worst"

they had experienced ever.

In a news conference yesterday at the Genuine Opposition headquarters in Makati City, the three men and one woman recounted how scores of gunmen abducted them on the morning of Election Day to prevent them from serving as poll inspectors, seized their ballot boxes, and filled out the ballots with the names of Team Unity senatorial candidates.

Within an hour, the "election" was

over. But the teachers were detained for three more days until the counting was over, showing TU candidates winning by a landslide.

"If they find out we're here, our families will be in danger," said one of them who said he had been doing poll duties since the Marcos era. "So we beg you. We might have no one to come home to."

Of the four witnesses, three have

served in elections since the 1980s. The fourth was serving as election inspector for the first time.

The experience had left the four teachers so shaken that one of them said he would willingly give up his career as a teacher to be spared from future election duty.

"I've had enough. I want to look for another job, even if it's manual labor," he

CEOs confront climate change with green projects

By TJ Burgonio

EVEN BEFORE "CARBON OFFSETTING" became a buzzword in the corporate world, some companies were already undertaking a slew of initiatives quietly to protect reefs, recycle wastes and, yes, develop cleaner fuel.

After walking around as part of Makati City's business district to show that climate change was on their agenda, the chief executive officers (CEOs) of some of the country's top corporations yesterday talked about their green projects.

Luis Miguel Aboitiz said Aboitiz Equity Ventures was supervising a reef sanctuary and providing technology to farmers to recycle piggy wastes into cooking fuel. Both projects are in Cebu.

Unknown to many, Ayala Foundation

CEOs/A9



"WALK THE TALK," Roberto Calingo of Mirant, Lydia Enrile, Chit Juan of Figaro, Edgar Chua of Shell, Malu Erni, Khalid Al Faddagh of Petron, Michael Hamlin of Team Asia and Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez of INQUIRER lead the captains of industry in a walk on Makati Avenue to unveil their corporations' environmental initiatives.

RUDY ESPERAS

Comelec orders Maguindanao retabulation

By Jocelyn R. Uy

RULING THAT IT WAS "STATISTICALLY IMPROBABLE" for 19 senatorial candidates to get zero votes in towns in Maguindanao, the Commission on Elections yesterday ordered a retabulation of tallies from the province at the municipal level.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said the tallying of votes based on municipal certificates of canvass (CoCs) and statements of votes would be conducted at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

Sitting as the National Board of Canvassers (NBC), the Comelec will create a special

COMELEC/A8

EZ2 **FOUR DIGIT**
16 24 | 7 5 7 0
Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
0 2 | 1 3 0 0
 (All in exact order)
MEGALOTTO 6/45
4 9 10 22 27 32
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Second FRONT PAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms mainly in the afternoon or evening. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Mostly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laong	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY SYMON TRINOS, PDI RESEARCH/05/30/07

SOURCE: PAGASA

Palace says Joe de V will stay

Mike A asks court to stop journalists' suit

By Leila B. Salaverria

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, has asked the Court of Appeals to stop a Makati regional trial court from holding a preliminary hearing on a class action suit filed against him by journalists.

In his petition filed last week, Arroyo said the Makati court's preliminary hearing based an amended complaint of 39 journalists violated his rights.

He claimed Makati Judge Zenaida Galapate-Laguilles has not yet acquired jurisdiction over the case because the journalists failed to pay about P9 million in docket fees on the original complaint.

His computation of fees was based on the P487.5 million damages sought by "each" journalist in their original complaint. He charged that the journalists amended the complaint, removing the word "each," to save on docket fees.

The Rules of Court require the payment of docket fees before a court takes jurisdiction over a case, he argued.

Arroyo asked the appellate court for a temporary restraining order to halt the preliminary hearing and, after proper proceedings, to reverse the Makati court's order admitting the amended complaint. He wants the appellate court to direct Laguilles to proceed with the preliminary hearing based on the original complaint.

Arroyo dropped the libel charges that he filed against the journalists after he survived a risky heart operation. But the journalists decided to continue their class suit.

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

AUCKLAND (VIA PLDT)—IT will still be a House of De Venecia when the new Congress reopens on July 22.

Malacañang has stepped into the fierce rivalry for the House leadership in the ruling coalition between the Lakas-CMD and the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), saying that Speaker Jose de Venecia will continue to preside over the chamber.

In fact, De Venecia will stay at the helm of the House for the remaining three years of the Arroyo presidency, said a top official who asked not to be named in deference to members of the Kampi, the President's party.

But President Macapagal-Arroyo, who ended her state visit here yesterday and was en route to Canberra, Australia, has refused to get involved in the

Lakas-Kampi row.

She has not issued any official stand on the political fight at the House started by her party.

The top Palace official said De Venecia would still be Speaker and that Kampi would be supporting him.

The Malacañang official also said that Kampi president Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte's statement that Kampi would be backing Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia for the speakership was "not a party position."

"There might be some Kampi who are supporting Joe, some Kampi who are supporting Pablito. It's not a party position to support [Garcia]," the official added.

Lakas-CMD spokesperson Heherson Alvarez, who is traveling with the President, said that ultimately it was Ms Arroyo who should break the impasse over the issue.

But he said the President needs to be cautious as the administration has to show a united front in the face of her critics appearing to have prevailed in

the Senate race.

Kampi has 40 House members against 92 from Lakas, which also has allies from the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Nationalist People's Coalition, Liberal Party and the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas.

Back in Manila, a newly elected congressman from Leyte and Kampi member, Martin Romualdez, said many freshman colleagues were attracted to Garcia and the party's reform agenda.

"The new breed of congressmen see Representative Garcia as the very antithesis of the despised *trapo* or traditional politician. As such, he is seen as a leader who can bring back respectability to the House," Romualdez said in a statement.

But Kampi old hands in the House continue to claim that the consensus in the party is to support De Venecia.

"Speaker De Venecia has shown leadership with vision and leadership attuned to the national purpose. He has staked this leadership on the most contentious legislation such as the E-vat

whenever the national interest so demanded," said Nueva Ecija Rep. Rodolfo Antonino, another Kampi leader.

"This is not the time for disunity. This is a time for continuity in the leadership of the House," Antonino said.

Kampi chair and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno has committed the party's support for De Venecia despite moves by Kampi to challenge the House leadership in the next Congress.

Villafuerte, however, said the statement of support for De Venecia was made without consultation with the party's leaders. He then announced Garcia's bid for the speakership.

Two groups of Kampi congressmen are now claiming they have majority of the members of the party behind them in supporting either De Venecia or Garcia.

Romualdez said Garcia's reform initiatives include the assignment of committee chairmanships and memberships based on the merit; and the equitable distribution of House funds to wean lawmakers away from patronage politics.

Palace joins search for Jonas Burgos

By Christine O. Avendano

MALACAÑANG HAS JOINED THE search for missing activist Jonas Joseph Burgos.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said Tuesday night that he has promised Burgos' mother, Edita, that he would do everything to help in finding her son, who had been missing since April 28 after being forcibly taken by armed men at a mall in Quezon City.

Ermita said he had also arranged a meeting between Ms Burgos and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Her-

mogenes Esperon Jr. next week so she could ask the latter "all the questions (she) want to ask."

"You can be very sure Edith, I would do everything within my power to help locate Jonas," was what Ermita said he told the widow of the late press freedom icon and newspaper publisher Jose "Joe" Burgos.

Ermita said he met with Ms Burgos in Malacañang the other day when she went there to hand-carry a letter for President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is away for state visits in New Zealand and Australia.

Ms Burgos, who believed her son was taken by the military and remained under their custody, wrote the President to help in "facilitating" the investigation being done separately by the police and military, according to Ermita.

In a meeting with INQUIRER editors and reporters, Ermita said he made the pledge to Ms Burgos whom he said was a "personal friend."

The executive secretary said that his friendship with Ms Burgos' husband started way back in the '70s. "Joe's son...JL is my godson," he revealed.

And it was because of his friendship

with the Burgos' family that he said he "promised that we would do something about (Jonas)."

"Sabi ko kay Ms Burgos, Edith mabuti pa personal na makipagkita ka kay Chief of Staff para all the questions you would like to ask directly you can ask him," Ermita said.

Ms Burgos' appointment next week with Esperon came days after she and former Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., were turned away from Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City, where they staged a rally to protest the disappearance of her son.



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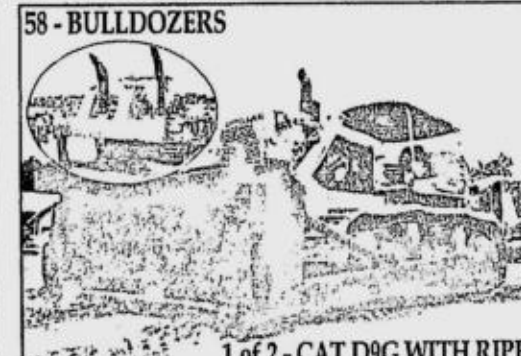
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146 - EXCAVATORS



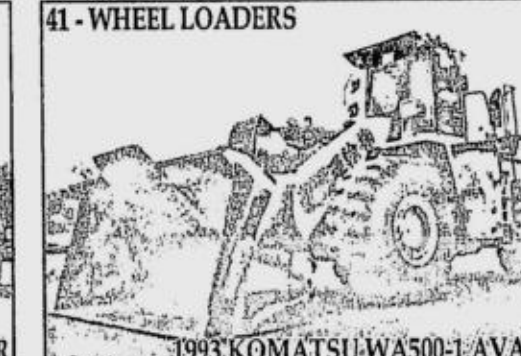
2000 KOMATSU PC300LC-6 AVANCE

58 - BULLDOZERS



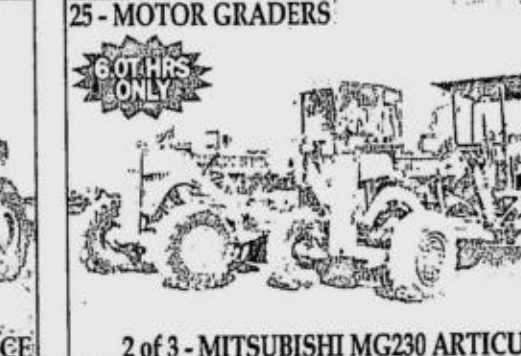
1 of 2 - CAT D9G WITH RIPPER

41 - WHEEL LOADERS



1993 KOMATSU WA500-1 AVANCE

25 - MOTOR GRADERS



2 of 3 - MITSUBISHI MG230 ARTICULATED

17 - WHEEL EXCAVATORS



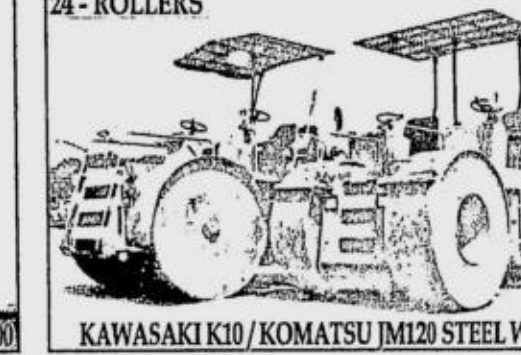
KOMATSU PM200J

3 - FORKLIFTS



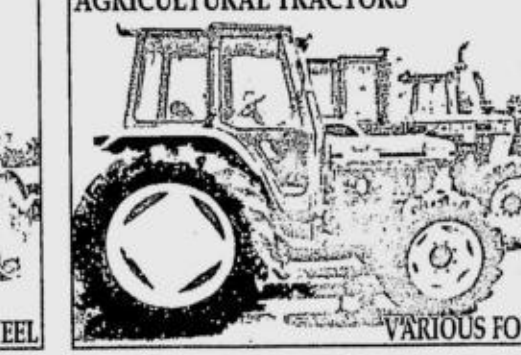
20 TONS TCM FD200

24 - ROLLERS



KAWASAKI K10 / KOMATSU JM120 STEEL WHEEL

AGRICULTURAL TRACTORS



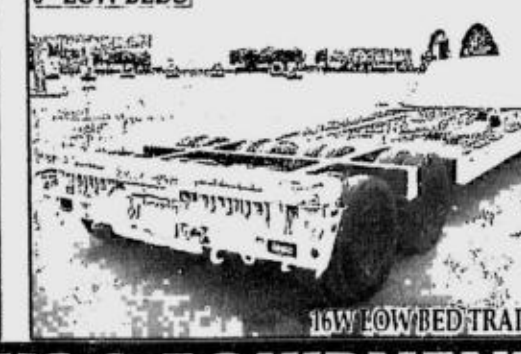
VARIOUS FORD 4WD

12 - ASPHALT FINISHERS



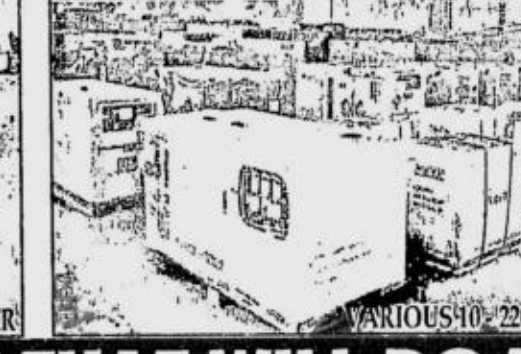
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Goodbye Lipo, Hello Ultrashape!

Ultrashape – Lipo Without The Suction continues to make waves in the slimming industry since its official launch in Manila early last year. Tagged as the first non-invasive breakthrough in body contouring, Ultrashape uses an ultrasound beam to breakdown and liquefy fats from outside the body. Promising an average reduction of about 2cm in just one treatment, it effectively reduces fat deposits on multiple body areas such as the tummy, flanks and thighs.

A small amount of fat reduction is just not worth undergoing surgery for. Liposuction usually involves massive body contouring, and is often not recommended when only a few inches of fat have to be removed. Thus, for the majority of people who only need a few touch-ups, Ultrashape offers a much safer alternative. It gives the benefits of liposuction without the risks or side effects, surgical scars and downtime. The result: Smooth, even and shapely curves you can flaunt even without your clothes on!

Due to its increasing popularity, demand for Ultrashape is high often resulting to fully booked appointment schedules from its growing roster of clients. These women have testified – they have finally found the best alternative to liposuction!



→ Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo, 38

"When Ultrashape was offered to me, I was excited! Ultrashape concentrates on that last hard-to-lose fat that remains in your body even after you've lost weight. I told myself, at last, there was a chance to lose all that stubborn fat that just wouldn't seem to go away. The doctor explained that Ultrashape destroys the fat cells in the targeted areas like my stomach and thighs. From there, the fat is metabolized and burned naturally by my body as energy. The treatment takes an hour and a half and is done once a month.

Ultrashape is really the perfect finishing touch for people like me who have lost weight but still have some lumps and bumps. After my first treatment, I immediately said to myself 'wow, it's perfect!' Ultrashape definitely has all the benefits of lipo minus the surgery and all the risks! There's no downtime whatsoever. So you see, liposuction is unnecessary."



→ Lyn Ching-Pascual, 34

"What intrigued me about Ultrashape is the claim – the easy treatment you can have in your lunch break. Apart from that, a friend of mine said that her friend tried Ultrashape as soon as it came out in the market. And she immediately lost 2 inches in just one month! Ultrashape promises an average of about 2cm, that's true, but it's also

possible for someone to lose even more than that too. That's why for me, even if liposuction was the only weight-loss treatment available, I'd rather walk up a building 100 times than have an operation because I don't want the possibility of dying for vanity.

With Ultrashape around, everyone now gets a better slimming option. Since it's non-invasive, I've got nothing to worry about. After trying it firsthand, I was like, 'Is this real?!' I just walked in, got the treatment and after an hour, I was on my way back to work again! It's as if nothing happened. The best part was, I could feel my tummy flatten only after a few weeks! No doubt it's the perfect way to trim down excess fats!"



→ Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez, 42

"Nothing really compares to Ultrashape. When I tried it, I immediately lost 4cm in my tummy after only 1 session! Imagine what a couple of sessions more can do! Diet pills and crash dieting don't work for me. With my catering and events business, I can't just turn my back from tasting and savoring my own menus. More so, if it's lipo we're

going to compare Ultrashape with, lipo doesn't even come close to it as far as safety is concerned. Besides, with Ultrashape around, why would anyone still want to settle for liposuction?! I must be very desperate or I must be so fat that I could no longer move before I'd consider getting it done. I just find it too dangerous!"

Undeniably, Marie France's Ultrashape is solid proof that the trends in slimming now slant towards the approach that's safer yet as effective. After going through a weight-loss program, it is highly recommended to continue with Ultrashape treatments right after. It's the best final touch-up in getting rid of remaining stubborn fats in the body. For booking schedules, call Marie France now at 894-BODY (2639).

Dare to ask. Be an Inquirer.

Cebu mayor guilty of sex harassment

THE SANDIGANBAYAN FOUND the defeated reelectionist mayor of Oslob, Cebu, guilty of sexual harassment and slight physical injuries and sentenced him to up to seven months in prison.

The case was filed in 2003 by a female casual employee of the town hall, who complained that Mayor Emilito Abines, then reeking of liquor, had cracked a "green joke" about her sex organ and wondered if he could touch it. She alleged that when she resisted his advances, the mayor grabbed her breasts, kicked her and hit her in the head with a paper puncher. He also tried to hit her with a plastic chair, the woman said.

The beating, she said, stopped only when another female em-

ployee entered the room and pacified the mayor by reminding him that he was fighting a woman and that he had some visitors waiting downstairs.

The Sandiganbayan's Third Division threw out Abines' defense that the woman's injuries were caused by an accident inside his office. He claimed she took a bad fall after "stepping on a revolving chair which slipped."

The court found Abines guilty of violating the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995, for which he was sentenced to six months in prison and fined P20,000. He was slapped an additional 30 days in jail and fined P200 for slight physical injuries. He also must pay at least P45,888 in damages, the court said.

CITIZENSHIP ROW OVER SC NOMINEE

Birth papers erroneous, Ong says

By Leila B. Salaverria

MAINTAINING THAT HE WAS qualified for the post, Sandiganbayan Justice Gregory Ong has disputed former senator Jovito Salonga's opposition to his appointment as Supreme Court justice and asked the high court not to stop the appointment.

In a comment to the high court filed through counsel Rene Saguisag, Ong said his birth certificate stating that he was Chinese was not the final word on his citizenship.

Salonga and lawyer Emilio Capulong, representing the Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan foundations, had asked the high court to stop Ong's appointment by President Macapagal-Arroyo. They said Ong was not a natural-born

Filipino as shown by his birth certificate.

The Constitution requires that a member of the Supreme Court and other collegiate courts be a natural-born citizen.

Ong was appointed by the President to replace retired Supreme Court justice Romeo Callejo two weeks ago. His appointment has been put on hold, however, after his citizenship was questioned even before Salonga filed his petition.

According to Ong, the citizenship entry on his birth certificate was a mistake made at the local registrar's office, and that he was actually a natural-born Filipino.

"That the birth certificate of Ong shows on its face that he is a Chinese national is not disputed; however, it is respectfully submitted

that such birth certificate cannot establish with finality that Ong is indeed a Chinese national, nor can it conclusively disprove the reality that he (and incidentally, his mother, Dy Guiok Santos) are, in fact, natural-born Filipinos," the court petition said.

Ong also said the Bureau of Immigration, which had issued a certificate stating he was a natural-born Filipino, has the legal authority to make such rulings.

And upon the confirmation of the Department of Justice, the BI can also issue a declaration recognizing Ong as a natural-born Filipino, he said.

"The BI has legal authority to and primary administrative jurisdiction to hear cases against an alleged alien, and in the process, determine

also his citizenship. Thus, the issue of citizenship is first threshed out in the BI and it is not exactly correct to say that the issue of citizenship is determined exclusively by the courts," Ong said in Filipino.

Salonga claimed that the BI and DOJ did not have the authority to alter Ong's nationality as stated in his birth certificate, as only the courts could do that.

Ong said he did not need a court order for him to be considered a natural-born Filipino.

He said the BI identification certificate contained the correct and factual information while his birth certificate contained erroneous information. In this case, the correct identification certificate should prevail over the erroneous birth certificate, he said.

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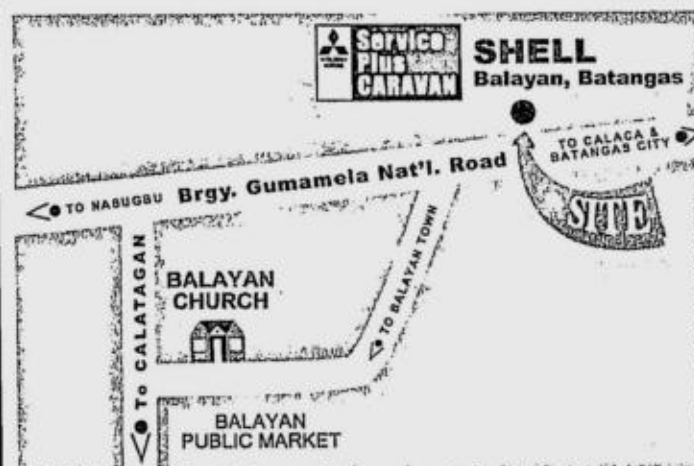


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Schools probed for contributions

DESPITE REPEATED WARNINGS BY THE Department of Education (DepEd), some Metro Manila public schools have been forcing their students to pay school fees in the form of "voluntary contributions," according to staffers of the department's Oplan Balik Eskwela (OBE).

The erring schools, which OBE staffers based at the DepEd main office in Pasig City did not identify, were investigated for alleged violation of DepEd Order 20 (Series of 2006) which prohibits public elementary and secondary schools from compelling students to pay such fees.

Of the 74 complaints received by the center during the past three days, however, "64 have been resolved while 11 others are for follow up," center staff have told the INQUIRER.

The complaints, many of which were "very general," involved at least 26 elementary schools and a similar number of high schools in Metro Manila, said the same sources. Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Thursday, May 31, 2007
Visitation

1st Reading: Zep 3:14-18 (or Rom 12:9-16)
Gospel: Luke 1:39-56

Mary then set out for a town in the Hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said, "You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. (...)"

And Mary said:
"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit exults in God my savior!
He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness,
and people forever will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,

Holy is his Name!
From age to age his mercy extends
to those who live in his presence.
He has acted with power and done wonders,

and scattered the proud with their plans.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones

and lifted up those who are downtrodden.
He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.
He held out his hand to Israel, his servant,
for he remembered his mercy,
even as he promised our fathers,
Abraham and his descendants forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary

Our God has come and it is cause for joy and gladness; it is the end to fear and we are to be renewed in God's love. God comes to Zion, the city of Jerusalem described as 'O daughter of Zion' (a title given to Mary who bears a mighty savior in the midst of the people). It is the savior that is the cause for rejoicing: for Mary, for Elizabeth and John and for all of us who seek to bring the Word into our world.

Paul's letter is a litany of commands about how we are to live. If all of us, the beloved children of God, could do only a few of them, the world would know that our savior has come to us, our God dwells with us and there is great cause for rejoicing. We are to live in hope, in joy, in love, in resistance, clinging to the good, looking to the needs of others, offering hospitality, blessing our persecutors, being compassionate with all, and staying close to the lowly (the meek, the nonviolent). These are all the characteristics of Elizabeth and John, as well as of Jesus and Mary's visit to one another. We learn how we must meet and embrace each other, bringing the Word, sharing the peace/resurrection proclamation, confirming and inspiring each other to sing the praises of God and all that God has done and is doing and will always do for all creation and all that he has made.

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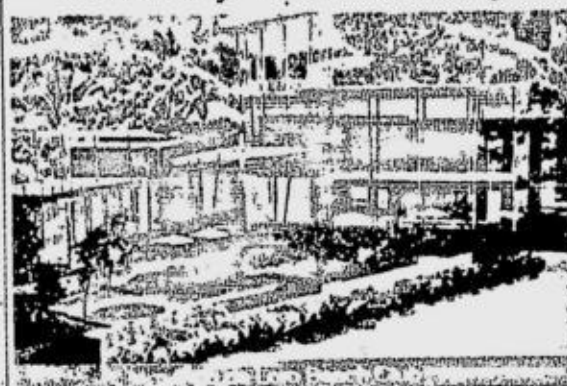
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Defensor concedes loss

From page A1

fresh political crisis if election results would be tampered with.

2 more from TU

Malacañang officials are expecting at least two more TU candidates to make it to the new Senate, and Defensor is not one of them.

Gabriel Claudio, Ms Arroyo's political adviser, told INQUIRER editors and reporters over dinner on Tuesday that Zubiri and Recto had "the best chances of coming in" to the Top 12.

TU campaign manager Reli German said the team had high hopes for a better result because some six million votes had yet to be canvassed.

But Jejomar Binay, the reelected mayor of Makati and president of the United Opposition, yesterday said it was now clear that the Senate would be dominated by the GO in the 14th Congress.

"Team Unity should just concede and accept the choice of the people," he said in a press conference at the Makati City Hall.

Binay said only the 12th slot remained up for grabs in the senatorial race, leaving only candidates in the 13th and 14th places in the running. (GO's Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III was No. 12 in the latest Comelec count.)

The opposition leader said the candidates in the first to 11th slots were virtually assured of victory regardless of purported attempts to pad or shave votes in Mindanao.

"It will be hard now to change the rankings. The one in

the 15th place will have to go past those ranked 14th and 13th just to reach the 12th," Binay said.

"So it will be like a fight among [TU members]," he added, referring to Zubiri, Recto and Defensor.

Numerically impossible

But Defensor said he had "already seen the numbers based on the reports of [his] staff officers."

"While the final outcome may not yet be determined, I am already sure that I cannot land within the Magic 12 ... It is just numerically impossible, and for this I concede," he said.

Defensor said, however, that he would not advise his fellow TU candidates to follow his lead because "each has different situations."

"Of course, I feel bad, but that's politics—you win some and lose some. I take full responsibility for my defeat. My family and campaign leaders did their best," he said, adding:

"The last two weeks of canvassing and monitoring have been grueling to me and my family. The tension, anxiety and the waiting have taken a toll even on my children, who have ardently included my victory in their night prayers. My wife and all my children campaigned for me like there was no tomorrow, from the early hours of the morning till the late hours of the night. With that I am already victorious."

Reinventing himself

While critics have claimed that Defensor's dogged defense of Ms Arroyo in the last three years was the reason for his defeat, he ex-

pressed loyalty to his former boss: "My defeat is not the President's loss."

Defensor, 37, said he would wait for a year before deciding what he would do next. In the meantime, he said, he would serve as his children's driver.

Speaking of himself in the third person, he said: "I am saddened that he would not be part of the 14th Congress. My unsolicited advice to him is to reinvent himself, show his independence from President Arroyo. He deserves to be seen as more than an apologist of the President."

This will be Defensor's first break from public office since seeking and winning a seat in the Quezon City Council 15 years ago. He has served variously as a Quezon City representative, environment secretary, and housing secretary.

For his run for the Senate, Defensor had quit his post as Ms Arroyo's chief of staff.

He decided to concede defeat after consulting with his wife Tuesday night.

Provocation without basis

On Tuesday night, the President's men—Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Secretary Ricardo Saludo, Claudio and German—denounced and denied the GO accusation that the administration was resorting to fraud to boost its candidates' chances.

Claudio described the GO manifesto as "a provocation without basis."

"GO's warning is arrogant, irresponsible and dangerous. They are agitating people by as-

cribing alleged election fraud to the administration, even in the face of mounting signs of cheating by the opposition itself," Claudio said.

He added: "The GO warning is uncalled-for and malicious since the opposition is ahead in the current national canvass at 8-2-2. But they are conditioning the minds of the people that TU can win more seats only by fraud."

"Even Pulse Asia's exit polls indicated that TU would win more seats—a possibility the opposition is now trying to preempt by warnings of an 'intense crisis' and 'instability.' With the insidious agit-prop (agitation propaganda), it is the opposition that is trying to provoke a crisis the way they did in 2005."

Ermita protested GO's dragging Ms Arroyo into the issue of fraud.

"Why does it have to be directed at the President?" he said. "The electoral process is being supervised by the Comelec, so by warning the President, they seem to say that the administration is cheating. Maybe it's the Comelec, being the body that supervises the election, that should be warned to be sure cheating is prevented and addressed."

Transparent canvass

At his weekly press briefing yesterday, Ermita echoed Claudio's statement that the opposition was conditioning the public mind that more TU candidates would win only by fraud.

"The very reason we have the Comelec [is for it to supervise the process], so let us allow the pro-

cess to be completed," he said.

He also said the canvass was "very transparent," and expressed hope that it would be over by next week.

Ermita said on Tuesday that Ms Arroyo was "being realistic" as far as the senatorial elections were concerned.

"We're just going by the actual count," he said. "As the administration, we wish for more [winners from our side], but we don't know in the end how things will be."

Ermita cited the case of GO candidate Antonio Trillanes IV, who was No. 11 in the latest Comelec tally: "He is now in [11th place], but if at the end of the day he comes out No. 13, let it not be said that there was cheating."

Whatever the final outcome, Ermita said the administration would consider it the voice of the people.

Vibrant democracy

"That's the essence of democracy. Let's respect the people's choice. But let's talk about the results after all the votes have been counted," he said.

Sarmiento says he won't quit as commissioner

From page A1

City), they might get lost and we all know the election in Lanao is a special election requiring special effort and special attention ... I had to make that directive to (protect) those ERs."

A report on ANC television network showed Sarmiento initially denying there were ERs in the hotel and then admitting they were indeed in the hotel, on being shown the ANC footage of ERs.

Sarmiento said Sarmiento was not aware that it was the same ERs being referred to in the report.

Sarmiento said the call of opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson for him to resign was based on a "half-baked, incomplete report."

"If the good senator would get the complete picture, he would realize that as the father of the family in that area ... I have to ensure clean and credible elections," Sarmiento said.

He said he would recommend that elections be separately held for the ARMM in the future.

Pneumonia-like symptoms

Sarmiento also said he was standing by his decision to resign as Task Force Maguindanao head, despite admitting earlier that he would be open to accepting the position again if offered to him again.

But he said that fellow commissioner, Nicodemo Ferrer, would be more than capable to handle the investigation into alleged fraud in the ARMM province.

He reiterated his resignation as task force head was not due to political pressure but was prompted by health reasons.

Sarmiento said he suffered from pneumonia-like symptoms and his blood pressure shot up while he was in Lanao.

Earlier yesterday, Sarmiento said in a separate media forum that he was willing to reassume his post as chief investigator of alleged cheating in Maguindanao.

"Given a few days to rest, I think I can reassume chairmanship of the task force," he said at the National Press Club's "Meet the Press" forum.

Referring to Sarmiento's decision to quit the Maguindanao investigating team, Ramon Casiple, director of the Institute of Political and Electoral Reforms, said Sarmiento could have been facing a difficult situation, given the "climate of fear" in the province.

With reports from Tina G. Santos and Leila B. Salaverria

Half-baked report

"If these were left (in Marawi

Ermita attributed the contrasting results of the local and senatorial elections to the "vibrant democracy" and the role of the media, saying the victory of many GO senatorial candidates was not a protest against the Arroyo administration.

He said 93 percent of all local and congressional posts were won by administration allies but they failed to carry most of the 12 TU candidates to victory.

"But the Senate is only part of the legislature. Why is there an overwhelming support for the administration in the House if the elections are a protest vote against the administration?" he said.

Still, Mayor Binay said: "Team Arroyo should accept that the Senate is dominated by the opposition, and so are the major cities of Metro Manila."

Opposition mayoral candidates won in the towns of San Juan, Navotas and Pateros, and the cities of Makati, Manila, Muntinlupa and Pasay. With a report from DJ Yap and Faith Alayon

Sarmiento says he won't quit as commissioner

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With reports from Tina G. Santos and Leila B. Salaverria



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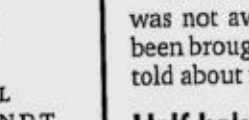
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RP, Australia to sign military accord today

From page A1

(Sofa), a military treaty that will legalize the entry and deployment of Australian troops in the Philippines, will highlight this visit sought by Prime Minister John Howard himself. The treaty is to be signed today at the Parliament House.

Ms Arroyo was accorded full military honors when she disembarked from a chartered Philippine Airlines plane and was received by Maj. Gen. Michael Jeffery, the governor general of the Commonwealth of Australia, Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile and other top Australian officials.

Jeffery and Howard will host a state dinner and luncheon, respectively, for the President and the Philippine delegation, which includes Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes.

Ms Arroyo and her party have just come from New Zealand, where they forged agreements involving \$1.23 billion in fresh investments.

'Butcher'

Soon after PAL Flight 001 touched down at the Royal Australian Air Force Base at 4 p.m., protesters made their presence felt.

A small plane suddenly appeared on the horizon. It carried a huge banner bearing the message "Stop Gloria-fying Berdugo Palparan."

The slogan was an apparent reference to retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, former commander of the 7th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army whom leftist groups tag "Berdugo" (Butcher), for supposedly ordering the killing of suspected communist members and their sympathizers in places where he had been assigned.

The Arroyo administration, through the military, is being blamed for the killings, and protests against these as well as other political killings had hounded the President in New Zealand and even earlier in Japan.

Ms Arroyo has repeatedly said she did not and would not condone the killing of political activists, journalists and church people.

The plane hovered above the tarmac for about an hour.

But the welcome ceremonies went on in the chilly afternoon, with the Royal Air Force rendering a 21-gun salute as Ms Arroyo inspected the honor guard.

Agence France-Presse reported that about 30 protesters rallied on Tuesday outside the Philippine Consulate in Sydney to express what a representative for the Philippine-Australia Youth Organization said was "alarm and indignation at the continuing assault on civil liberties and human rights in the Philippines."

Symbol of ownership

The presidential motorcade then proceeded to the Philippine Embassy in Moonah Place, Yarralumla, where members of the Filipino community awaited Ms Arroyo's arrival.

As a symbolic gesture, Ms Arroyo planted a seedling of red maple outside the embassy building, which was inaugurated by her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, in 1964. Embassy officials said it symbolized the Philippines' ownership of the embassy grounds.

"You should be called not only overseas Filipino workers or OFWs, but overseas Filipino Investors or OFIs," Ms Arroyo told members of the Filipino community.

"Six years ago, you sent \$7 billion. But you now send \$13 billion; the \$6-billion difference is your investment," she said to the delight of the crowd, which represented some 150,000 Filipino-Australians spread out all over the huge continent.

No. 1 mission

Ms Arroyo's visit to Australia is both historic and controversial.

She is the second Philippine leader after President Fidel Ramos to visit Australia, although Philippine relations with this country date back to 1880 with the marketing of Australian fresh bottled milk in Manila. But formal diplomatic ties only started in 1946.

Ms Arroyo's No. 1 mission—the signing of the Sofa—is expected to trigger a storm of protest in Canberra and Manila because of the less than smooth public reaction to a similar agreement—the Philippines' Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States.

Defense Secretary Ebdane refused to disclose details of the Sofa, saying: "I don't want to jump the gun [on the Australians]."

But he added: "This will be very advantageous to us because we will be provided additional amenities. This is a very good document and all the provisions were properly worked on, and all concerns acted upon."

Ebdane said the defense department would first solicit the support of senators and the public before presenting the treaty to the Senate for ratification.

"It will be the President that will discuss these things in a proper forum," he said.

'Much improved' version

Ebdane said protesters should first get hold of the document before complaining.

"The fact is, there are also ongoing talks with other countries. Since this is the second agreement [after the VFA] that we will be entering into, I think this is a much improved [version]," he said.

Under the Sofa, Australia will donate 28 "shallow-water river boats," similar to those used during the Vietnam War, which would allow the Philippine military to patrol its vast inland waterways, said Assistant Defense Secretary Joji Aragon.

The two countries have been negotiating the agreement for years. If passed by the Philippine Senate, it will eventually see Australian troops engaged in military exercises in the Philippines.

Ben Coleman, Australian assistant defense secretary, told a press briefing in Manila on Tuesday that the accord was needed because "we have a common interest in terms of a peaceful and secure region."

"In particular, we are dealing with common threats from terrorists in the region," he said without naming any group.

Coleman said it was "premature" to discuss any date for the deployment of Australian troops in the Philippines or the locations for possible joint exercises in the country. *With an AFP report*

Comelec orders Maguindanao retabulation

From page A1

provincial board of canvassers to conduct the retabulation. The special board will be composed of lawyers from the poll body's main office.

Should the newly created board find nothing legitimate to canvass, the NBC "will act accordingly," Abalos said.

The NBC has also created two special board of canvassers that will retabulate tallies for North Cotabato and South Cotabato.

Padding and shaving of votes have been found in the CoCs of the two provinces.

There are 337,108 registered voters in Maguindanao, 556,678 in North Cotabato, and 628,635 in South Cotabato—a total of 1.52 million.

Despite the perceived fraud perpetrated against Genuine Opposition (GO) candidates, it continued to lead the race.

10 TU bets won in Sulu

The GO's standing remained solid at 8-2-2 although 10 candidates of the administration's Team Unity landed in the Magic 12 in Sulu, with Jamalul Kiram at No. 1.

Only Legarda and Francis "Chiz" Escudero were in the winning circle in the Sulu tally.

The NBC yesterday read out vote tallies from Sulu, Davao del Sur (6-4-2 in favor of the GO) and Taguig-Pateros (9-1-2 also in favor of the GO).

As of 5 p.m. yesterday, with the NBC canvassing 92 percent of the 103 CoCs or from 81 provinces and 14 cities in Metro Manila, Legarda was still at No. 1 with Escudero trailing her by 164,109 votes.

GO candidates Panfilo Lacson and Manuel Villar stayed at No. 3 and No. 4, respectively. Independent candidate Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan trailed Villar by 660,023 votes.

Benigno "Noy" Aquino III (GO), Edgardo Angara (TU) and Joker Arroyo (TU) remained on the fifth, sixth and seventh slots, respectively.

Still at No. 9 was Alan Peter Cayetano (GO), followed by Gregorio Honasan, an independent. Antonio Trillanes IV (GO) and Aquilino Pimentel III (GO) hung on to the 11th and 12th slots.

At a press briefing after the NBC adjourned its session, Abalos said "the board has set aside the [Maguindanao] CoC *moto proprio* [on its initiative] considering that the canvass was made when nobody was present."

The provincial election supervisor Lintang Bedol, who was summoned on Friday to establish the authenticity of the Maguindanao CoC, said copies of the provincial vote tallies supposedly for the dominant minority party and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections remained unclaimed in his office.

Representatives of senatorial candidates and other parties were also not around when he conducted the canvassing at the provincial hall in Shariff Aguak, Bedol said on Friday.

At gunpoint

This compelled the NBC to defer last week the canvassing of the CoC, believed to be carrying ballots that teachers had filled out allegedly at gunpoint with the names of TU candidates.

Based on the CoC, the TU swept the senatorial elections in Maguindanao, with Luis "Chavit" Singson at No. 1 and Prospero Pichay at No. 2. The TU sweep drew protests from the GO, which accused the TU of fraud.

The NBC also directed all election officers and members of the municipal board of canvassers from the 22 towns in Maguindanao to bring to the PICC the election returns, the primary source document of all votes tabulated in the province.

No-show

But the group did not show up at the PICC yesterday.



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo inspects the honor guard after arriving in Canberra to sign a military cooperation and assistance pact with Australia.

Even Bedol, who was mentioned twice in the "Hello Garci" tapes, was a no-show. The "Hello Garci" tapes suggested that President Macapagal-Arroyo rigged the 2004 elections in connivance with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. Both denied any wrongdoing.

The NBC called for the recanvassing of the CoC from Maguindanao despite objections from election lawyers of GO candidates, most of whom scored zero in the province.

Initially, Abalos asked whether the GO lawyers wanted the board to order a recanvassing or declare a failure of elections in Maguindanao.

Disenfranchisement

Abalos did not agree to exclude the Maguindanao CoC from the canvassing by the NBC as insisted by Pimentel's lawyer, Francisco Joaquin III, because this would result in the disenfranchisement of some 300,000 voters.

But Joaquin argued that disenfranchisement would "merely be a consequence of preserving the integrity of the electoral process."

"We can preserve the integrity of the system without disenfranchising people. When you say we set aside this particular CoC, does it mean we have to recanvass or call for a special elections in the area?" Abalos replied.

While GO lawyer Sixto Brillantes manifested on the floor that he supported Joaquin's petition, he said that the board should not expect the GO to file a petition to declare failure of elections in the province because this was the board's option.

"Considering that they (municipal board of canvassers) are absent, the commission can now rule that there can be no valid canvass of the Maguindanao CoC and therefore should necessarily result in the exclusion of the CoC, as well as other supporting documents, which are not present before this commission," Brillantes said.

A lawyer of Zubiri suggested that a new board of canvassers be created to determine the authenticity of the election documents.

TU lead lawyer Romulo Macalintal, for his part, said that in the absence of authentic documents, the "proper remedy" was to proceed with the canvassing without prejudice to the evidence, which the other camp will present.

Provincial election supervisors Lillian Radam and Yogie Martirizan, for South Cotabato and North Cotabato, respectively, have been directed to show up for the second time before the NBC yesterday to explain the discrepancies in the provincial CoCs. But they did not appear.

Regional director Michael Abas said he had exerted all efforts to locate the two Comelec officers but to no avail.

"Until now, their whereabouts are unknown," he admitted.

Koronadal canvassers

Of the 11 municipal board of canvassers summoned by the NBC, only those from Koronadal City appeared before the NBC yesterday with pertinent documents.

Leila de Lima, a lawyer of Cayetano, said the padding and shaving of votes appeared to have taken place at the provincial level because the CoC from Koronadal jived with GO's copy of the CoC from the city.

She said the city CoC showed Edgardo Angara with 20,008 votes but the provincial SoV indicated that he earned 30,008 votes. Joker Arroyo had 16,697 in the city CoC, but it was 26,697 in the provincial copy.

The same case applied to the GO's Legarda who earned 37,711 according to the city CoC but it became 40,711 in the provincial SoV. The same case applied to Michael Defensor (11,456/ 21,456); Vicente Magsaysay (8,663/ 18,663); Tessie Oreta (5,564/15,564); Pichay (10,422/20,422); Ralph Recto (14,506/28,506), Vicente Sotto III (7,174/17,174) and Miguel Zubiri (21,813/27,183).

Brillantes said that should the new board of canvassers find that Legarda's votes were padded by 43,000 votes, the GO was willing that the votes be deducted from her total tally.

PARTY-LIST VOTES

Comelec as of 2:30 p.m., May 30

Rank	Party-list	Votes
1	BUHAY	1,064,416
2	BAYAN MUNA	872,278
3	CIBAC	691,236
4	GABRIELA	538,038
5	APEC	461,685
6	A TEACHER	432,645
7	AKBAYAN	397,140
8	BUTIL	396,572
9	ALAGAD	386,084
10	BATAS	350,313
11	COOP-NATCO	341,986
12	ABONO	332,445
13	ANAKPAWIS	326,502
14	AGAP	303,983
15	ARC	285,765
16	AN WARAY	267,413
17	AMIN	246,345
18	FPJPM	245,400
19	KABATAAN	204,554
20	ABS	204,007
21	ABA-AKO	197,538
22	SENIOR CITIZENS	191,019
23	KAKUSA	186,465
24	UNI-MAD	179,050
25	ANAD	165,365
26	VFP	164,262
27	BANAT	154,124
28	ABAKADA	153,940
29	BANTAY	153,551
30	1-UTAK	149,542

COMPILED BY TARRA QUESMUNDO

4 Maguindanao teachers narrate poll cheating

From page A1

said, speaking like the others in Filipino.

The INQUIRER first broke their story last weekend, based on the affidavits two of them had executed. Earlier, the INQUIRER also published the account of another Maguindanao teacher who said she and the others were forced at gunpoint to fill out ballots with the names of TU candidates.

Yesterday was the first time the four teachers appeared in public to personally narrate how what was supposed to have been an exercise in democracy for them turned into a nightmare.

Accounts of widespread cheating in Maguindanao—where President Macapagal-Arroyo's candidates supposedly scored a 12-0 shutout—have delayed the official canvassing of the votes in that province in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The woman teacher said past elections in Maguindanao had always been marked by cheating, but this time she was shocked that teachers like her were not even allowed to go to the polling precincts.

"This was worse. In the last elections, at least we were in our polling place ... But this time, it was as if we were kidnapped," she said.

The teachers were accompanied yesterday by reelectionist Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who along with fellow Genuine Op-

position candidates, had asked the Commission on Elections to declare a failure of elections in the entire province of Maguindanao.

Others willing to talk

Lacson said he would ask the four teachers to appear before the Comelec to tell what happened. He said around 100 teachers from Maguindanao were willing to testify but they could not leave for Manila all at once.

The four teachers spoke alternately, each supplying details the others had left out.

They narrated how gunmen abducted them and about 60 other board of election inspectors (BEI) members from the Pagalungan municipal treasurer's office, where they had picked their ballot boxes and other election paraphernalia.

They said they were brought to the neighboring town of Montawal on motor vehicles and by pump boats. Despite their conspicuously big group, no one from the Comelec or the police showed up to help them.

The teachers never knew what happened at their own polling precincts that day.

Upon reaching their destination, the teachers' mobile phones were confiscated.

"We were in a banana field. There

were no tables. We sat down on the ground. We were told to open the ballot boxes. They took care of filling up the ballots. We let them. We were afraid because they were armed," one of the male teachers said.

'We want to be home alive'

The teachers said their abductors wore camouflage jackets like those worn by soldiers, but they were not sure if they were soldiers.

In filling out the ballots, the armed men used "guides" which had the names of all the 12 TU candidates.

The teachers also said the men wrote down the names of the mayor and his party mates.

"If you were there, you would just follow. We had to save our lives. We had to come home alive so we obeyed their orders," said the woman teacher.

The teachers said that when it grew dark, they were brought to Shariff Aguak, the provincial capital, instead of to Pagalungan, for the canvassing.

They said they stayed at the old National Irrigation Administration compound near the provincial capitol for the next two days and three nights to wait for Comelec municipal officer Elisa Gazmin.

They said that when Gazmin arrived, the proclamation of winners took place

at 3 a.m., May 17, even if only the results from four out of 12 barangays in Pagalungan had been tallied.

They said the other unopened ballot boxes containing the results from 19 election precincts remained at the Pagalungan municipal hall, corroborating an earlier affidavit of Pagalungan board of election inspector Faizal Kalantungan.

'Crazy elections'

The woman teacher said she and her colleagues were able to contact a supporter of Lacson for assistance so they could relate their experiences.

"We want to tell the truth to put a stop to crazy elections. Take pity on us teachers who are used every elections. Also take pity on the people who see no end to their hardships," she said.

Allegations of cheating supposedly in favor of TU candidates echoed elsewhere in Mindanao.

South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes accused provincial election supervisor Lilia Radam of manipulating election results in the province.

In a mobile phone interview, Fuentes claimed the certificate of canvass (CoC) brought to the Comelec office in Manila did not tally with the CoC coming from the province.

She said the "dagdag-bawas" (vote-padding and -shaving) scheme benefited

mostly TU candidates, as well as the opposition's Loren Legarda.

"The CoC that was taken to Manila had a different result. From 50,000 to 100,000 votes were added to different candidates, mostly Team Unity," Fuentes said in Filipino.

She said eight members of the provincial board of canvassers in South Cotabato had executed an affidavit stating that results had been altered.

Fuentes said affected senatorial candidates, like GO's Aquilino Pimentel III, should be the one to file a formal complaint.

Radam could not be immediately reached for comment.

In Tubod, Lanao del Norte, police failed to disperse around 200 supporters of the family of outgoing Gov. Imelda Dimaporo, who had blocked the entrance to the Sangguniang Panlalawigan building where the canvassing for the congressional race in the first district was to be held.

The provincial canvassers were not able to convene as the protesters would not let them in.

Police chief Supt. Linnog Bagul told reporters that his men could not disperse the crowd because they did not have any truncheons or shields with them. *With reports from Ryan D. Rosaura, Richel Umel and Aquiles Zonia, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Adv. No.	Particulars	ABC	Bidder's Fee
07-046a	64,286 pcs. of school bag, backpack with design	1,800,000.00	1,000.00
07-046b	Various school materials	13,785,819.04	7,000.00

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Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years, with an amount of at least 50% of the project for bidding. The BAC-GS shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. Post-qualification of the lowest candidate bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statements and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

1. Issuance of bid documents	May 31-June 18, 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	June 7, 2007, Thursday, 2:00 P.M.
3. Opening of Bids	June 19, 2007, Tuesday, 2:00 P.M.
4. Bid Evaluation	June 20, 2007
5. Post-qualification	June 21, 2007
6. Notice of Award	June 22, 2007

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a refundable bidder's fee in the amount as indicated above to the Cash Receipts Division, Office of the Provincial Treasurer.

The Province of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid and, reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defect or informality of the bid proposals received and to accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the government.

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THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2007

PDEA: Drug traders buying their freedom

By Alcuin Papa

OPERATORS IN THE ILLEGAL TRADE in drugs are throwing money at the criminal justice system to buy their freedom, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) claimed after seven Chinese drug suspects were acquitted by the Court of Appeals.

PDEA Director General Dionisio Santiago said the acquittal was "another crippling blow to the country's anti-illegal drugs campaign as it sends unpleas-

ant signals that big-time drug lords truly have power to go scot-free."

"The sad reality is that organized drug syndicates have prepared huge sums of money for all levels of the criminal justice system to ensure that their members who are behind bars are set free," Santiago said.

He said drug law enforcers are "dying in the streets in the performance of their sworn duties to rid our society of the drug menace while the perpetrators could easily buy their freedom owing to the millions of money in the illegal drug industry."

Recently, the Court of Appeals overturned the conviction by a lower court of Cai Xihe alias Chua Sak Hap; Tian Sang; Cai Dushi alias Chua Tok Sit; Yan Qizhong alias Sing Hong; Lao Chi Dak alias Chi Jak; King Cheng; and Lim Chamou alias Cha Bon.

The seven were meted life sentences by the Pasig Regional Trial Court.

In overturning the lower court's decision, the Court of Appeals cited a technicality, saying drug operatives "mis-handled" the January 2002 drug bust of

a clandestine shabu lab being operated by the Chinese nationals.

Santiago said it was interesting that despite these legal loopholes, convictions are obtained in the lower courts only to be reversed in the appellate court.

"Does the defect lie with the enforcement of the law or with the prosecution? Despite this temporary setback, stakeholders in the drug law enforcement community vow to carry on with their unrelenting and diligent efforts to attain the vision of a drug-free Philippines," Santiago said.

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Danding says he can prove ownership of UCPB shares

By Volt Contreras

BUSINESSMAN EDUARDO "DANDING" COJUANGCO Monday said he can prove ownership of the sequestered 72.2-percent block of shares in the United Coconut Planters Bank which the Sandiganbayan has declared to be government-owned.

In a motion for reconsideration filed by lawyer Estelito Mendoza, Cojuangco appealed the antiracket court's May 11 resolution which upheld a 2003 ruling that the UCPB shares were illegally acquired using coco levy funds.

The court's First Division dismissed a motion by Cojuangco and the Philippine Coconut Producers Federation Inc. (Cocofed) for a "full-blown trial" over the ownership of UCPB.

Cojuangco maintained there are still "triable issues" in support of his claim, citing a 1975 agreement between him and Pedro Cojuangco, president of the First United Bank (the former name of UCPB), identifying Cojuangco Jr. as the "only buyer" of the shares.

He said he never waived his right to present evidence, as shown by records of the hearing.

"Unless defendant Cojuangco is given opportunity to present evidence, there would be an effective denial of his right to be heard, a violation of due process rights," the motion for reconsideration said.

The May 11 ruling affirmed with finality the Sandiganbayan July 11, 2003 decision forfeiting Cojuangco's shares in the UCPB and awarding them to the government.

The court noted that the trial that Cojuangco is petitioning for would be a "futile effort" since the Cocofed's defense relied heavily on Presidential Decree 755, which has already been declared as "constitutionally infirm."

Through PD 755, the Philippine Coconut Federation and Cojuangco, the levy fund administrator, used the coco levy funds, known as the Coconut Consumer Stabilization Fund, to acquire 72.2 percent of UCPB, which was then known as the First United Bank, in 1975.

In 1986, the Presidential Commission on Good Government sequestered the shares.

The May 11 ruling, however, deemed its 2004 ruling affirming government ownership of the 27 percent block of San Miguel Corp. shares, also bought with coco levy funds and being held and administered by the UCPB, as a "separate and appealable" judgment. Cojuangco is free to appeal the ruling before the Supreme Court.

The court declared that the 27 percent SMC shares in the name of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIF)—which form part of a 47 percent block of SMC shares that the PCGG sequestered in 1986—was owned by the government in trust for the country's coconut farmers.

NZ investments a vote of confidence in GMA — TU

THE INVESTMENTS AMOUNTING TO \$1.22 billion that President Macapagal-Arroyo is bringing home from her five-day official visit to New Zealand was a vote of confidence in the government's conduct of the May 14 elections, the administration's Team Unity said yesterday.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, TU media bureau head and campaign strategist, said the renewed confidence of New Zealand and other members of the international community in the Philippine economy was proof that the country can sustain its growth momentum.

"It is very clear that the fresh investments that the President brought home this week from New Zealand, along with the over \$1 billion worth of business deals that she earlier forged with Japanese investors in Tokyo, are testaments to the trust and confidence of the global community in the Arroyo govern-

ment's greater political and economic stability arising from the strong macro-economic fundamentals and the peaceful and orderly conduct of the midterm polls," he said.

"More and more investment roads are now leading to the Philippines with foreign investors coming here and sinking new money into our economy after the holding of generally clean and orderly elections," Evardone said.

Ms Arroyo's visit to New Zealand has yielded over \$1.22 billion worth of investments, including \$1 billion for reforestation, \$150 million in a gold mining deal, \$40 million for the local wood processing industry and \$30 million for the export of Philippine tropical fruits to New Zealand.

From New Zealand, the President was scheduled to fly to Australia yesterday for a two-day state visit.

Cynthia D. Balana



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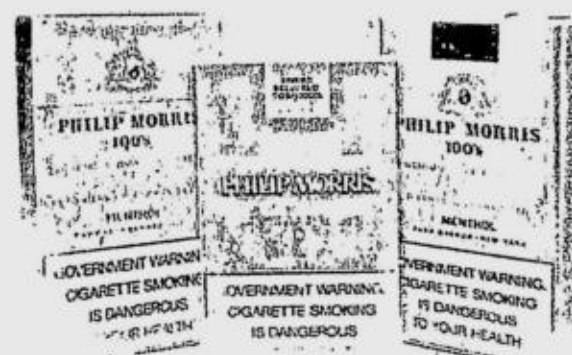
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Dangerous deception

IN THE FACE OF MOUNTING INTERNATIONAL pressure to put a stop to extrajudicial executions and other human rights violations, the Arroyo administration continues to talk or act as if it had no problem with the international community. Last Tuesday, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales denied that the Philippine government was reaping international condemnation for its failure to stop the “unexplained killings” of journalists and Left-leaning activists. “The Philippine government has the sympathy of the world for these killings,” he was quoted as saying. “Have you heard any country condemning the Philippines?”

EDITORIAL If Gonzales means an unequivocal and official denunciation of the Arroyo administration by a foreign government, he is right in saying that there has been none so far. But neither has any country expressed sympathy for the way the government has been trying to win the war against communist rebels, much less for the hundreds of “by-products” of the war, as Gonzales calls the victims of extrajudicial killings. In February, for instance, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney expressed her government’s concern over the killings and urged the Arroyo administration to “make every effort to investigate and prosecute those responsible” for them. “We are concerned,” she said. “We take extrajudicial killings or murders seriously

.... Human rights are critical to every country that is a democracy.” In March, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Eric John, told the US Senate foreign relations subcommittee on Asia that President Macapagal-Arroyo was ultimately responsible for the actions of government security forces and for the increasing attacks against the foes of her administration.

Last month, the European Parliament unanimously approved a resolution urging President Arroyo to put an end to political killings and bring those responsible for them to justice, while noting that her efforts so far had not been enough. The resolution said the government “must show real commitment to investigating those killings and a readiness to bring those responsible for them, including representatives of security forces, to justice.”

On the eve of the President’s current three-nation trip, Australian Ambassador Tony Hely said his country and New Zealand were concerned about the killings. Like most governments, Hely said, Australia was “concerned about those killings and we take opportunities to express those concerns to the Philippines and to ask what they can do to stop the killings and to bring the perpetrators to justice.” The same issue would certainly be raised in New Zealand, he predicted.

This “concern” over the killings has been a recurring theme in almost all the statements made by foreign governments in the last few months, and nothing in such statements suggests even an iota of understanding or sympathy for the way the Arroyo administration has been dealing with the problem. Thus, for Gonzales to say that the administration has gained international sympathy for its predicament or the manner it has addressed the problem is to give international public opinion a positive but decidedly deceptive spin.

If this is how the administration sees itself in the eyes of the world, the end is nowhere in sight for the murderous rampage. Because if anything has moved the administration to change its rhetoric on the winning of the war against the communist insurgency or to take initial steps toward solving the killings, it has been the pressure exerted by the international community, like the report of United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Philip Alston, which concluded that the military was largely responsible for the killings and that the government remained “in denial” over the involvement of its security forces. The President, for one, has stopped praising the likes of (now retired) Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who was blamed for many unsolved killings of leftist activists wherever he was assigned. In New Zealand earlier this week, Ms Arroyo told reporters she was inviting the international community “to work with us to erase this legacy of violence and [human rights] violations forever.”

But if Gonzales’ view reflects the real attitude of the administration, other nations that care about human life and freedom may have to express their displeasure in a manner that even he cannot misunderstand or twist to suit the administration’s own purposes.

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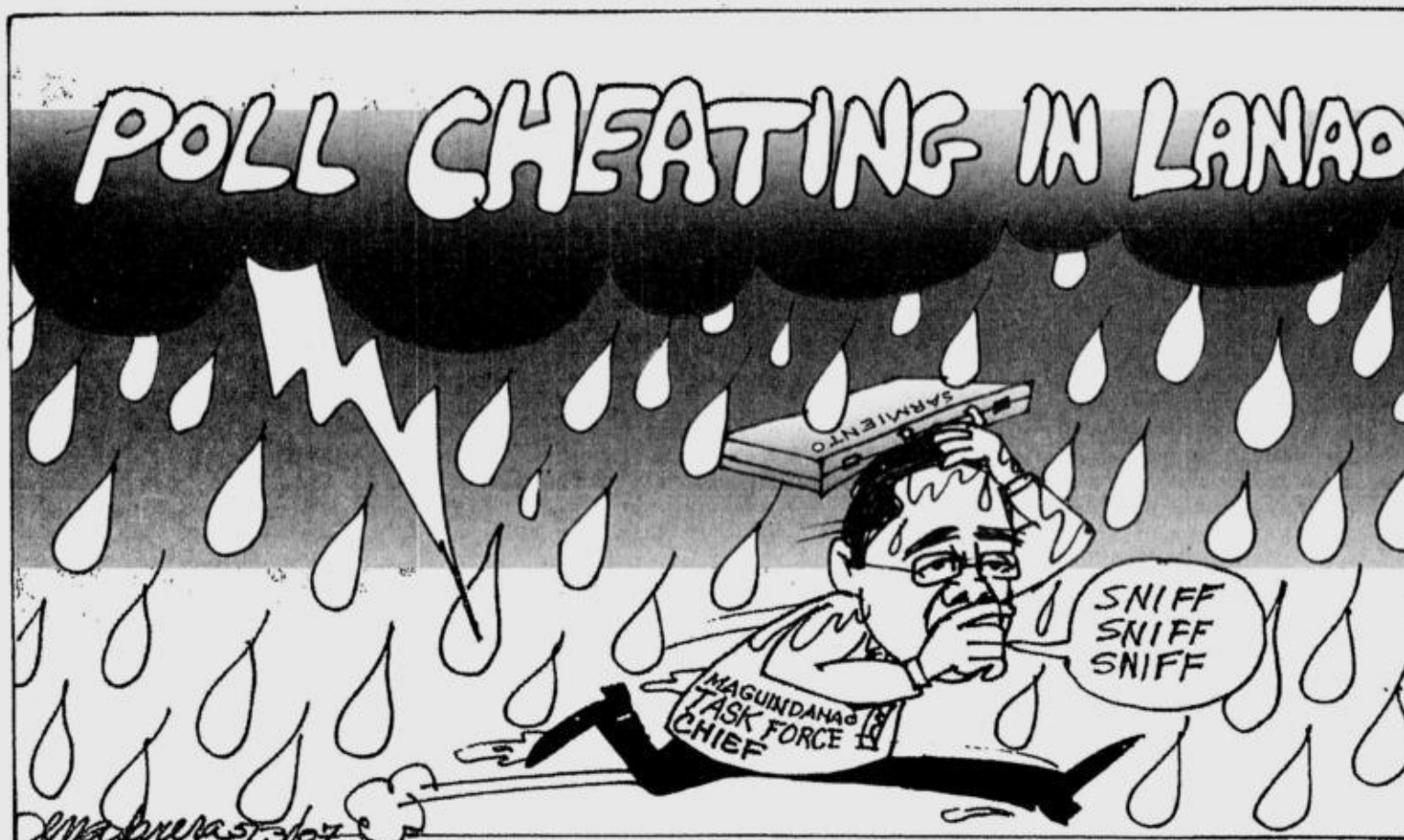
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Read with caution

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

Here are the voices of three of them: Nene of cemetery niches, Emong, “kalkal boy” and Michael, garbage cuisine chef.

Nene is 11. Her insane mother disappeared, leaving her with a La Loma “apartment” dweller: a tender of cemetery niches. Some questions and answers:

Q. What did you do on your birthday?
 A. We ate Jollibee. We lumped those thrown into the garbage can.

Q. Where do you live?
 A. Here in the cemetery. Sometimes in the push cart.

Q. Are you not afraid?
 A. I’m used to it. I grew up there.

Q. What work do you do?
 A. I babysit my brother. I scavenge.

She also climbs moving jeeps and shines the shoes of passengers. At the fast-food shop, Nene stopped eating to pack the food as “take home-meal for her grandmother.”

Q. If you’re able to study, what would you like be?
 A. A doctor, so I can have my mother treated.

Q. Where is she now?
 A. (weeping) Wandering aimlessly.

In the painting, 10-year-old Emong drinks juice, next to the Christ. In life, he hops from junk shop to another, selling what his group scrounged: plastic bottles, empty cans, cartons, etc.

Q. Do your parents take care of you?
 A. Early morning, my mother and friends already play *tong-its*, bingo.

Q. Do you have other work?
 A. We sell *pan de sal*. At 2 a.m., we line up in the bakery, get the bread. By 7 a.m., the bread

runs out. We breakfast on a peso worth of rice. Basketball follows, *Cara y cruz* afterwards. Then, *kalkal*.

Kalkal boys bypass the clock. “I overslept as I waited for my brother to wake up, so I could use the bed,” says one. “There was no food left for me,” explains another. “I sold additional *pan de sal* so my younger brother would have food.”

Pers time we had cake, Emong says on tasting *hopia*. Afternoons, they eat from the garbage can. Usually, it’s rotten cabbage and *sayote*.” And his interpretation of the “Hapag painting” is striking: the kids invited the Master, and not vice versa.

“The Filipino from all walks of life is hospitable,” Velasco reflects. “This last supper is a banquet of the poor kids for ... a special Guest.” “*Kumain ka na ba?*” is a Filipino traditional greeting. And so is “*Kain tayo*.”

In the painting, 13-year-old Michael holds a paper plate. As *Payatas* scavenger, he’s an expert on *papag*, a mix of scraps from the dump. “You boil it, then fry. Or cook with vinegar and soy sauce. It’s sour because it’s spoiled. But *papag* fills the stomach. And it doesn’t last until evening.”

Some 400 trucks dump refuse daily. “We know where the trucks come from, just by the smell. I’m here every day. I don’t care about the smell. I can eat waste. What’s important is milk for my younger brother.”

Home is 2 kilometers from the dump where a jobless grandfather and siblings wait. Invited to a fast-food restaurant, Michael just stares. To this boy, “everything and everyone is garbage.”

Velasco sat, at a coffee shop, beside a lady whose remote lacked a few buttons. She spoke of Edgar Allan Poe and Leo Tolstoy. She squinted at “Hapag” and said: “This strikes me as a poor kids’ last supper. But they’re not actually poor ... because they have Jesus.”

And that’s where the title of this 237-page Kenosis Publication book came from: “They Have Jesus: Stories of the Children of Hapag.” Ask your favorite bookstore. It’s a good read, but not “on a full stomach.”

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Go the distance

THERE’S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

much what being a commissioner in Benjamin Abalos’ Comelec means—it’s called the Commission on Elections, as the text messages say, because the commissioners make their commission on elections—his resignation would have made a huge impact. It would, of course, have also entailed huge balls. I know Rene to be a decent and soft-spoken fellow. Who knows? Maybe he’ll yet go the full distance. The mild-mannered Clark Kent may yet turn out to be Superman.

I personally hope he does. He doesn’t just have Maguindanao to worry about, he has the weight of Lanao to lug around on his shoulders, too. The wholesale cheating didn’t just happen in Maguindanao, it happened in Lanao as well, whose election he just supervised. His name has been lent to an exercise that could very well go down in history, or in the eyes of the world, as a cautionary tale on how not to conduct an election. Which was the plan to begin with: Abalos sent him there to justify the unjustifiable. Or to deodorize the stench: To put his serene face on the billboard while Garci’s brethren did their dirty work behind.

All the Namfrel watchdogs have been shouting their heads off about the cheating there being more massive and brazen than the one that took place in 2004. Indeed, never mind Namfrel, the evildoers did their evil in plain view of the world, showing no fear or trepidation while TV cameras rolled. They were all over the news last Monday night, not least on ABC5, tearing up envelopes and writing the names of their favorite candidates on the ballots.

It came as no surprise. The very premise of the Lanao election was that it would be fraud-

fraught. The only question was how absolute it would be. Quite simply, the exercise was plaster on a gangrenous wound, a wound that had been festering since the last elections. The ones who stole the crown for GMA in that part of the world in the last elections have not only not been punished, they have been amply rewarded, not least with the top positions in the AFP and PNP That cannot deter cheating, that can only fan it.

I did say in a column last week, upon seeing the plenitude of anti-fraud groups, notably the foreign ones that descended on us, that our real problem wasn’t really exposing the cheating, it was getting the public to get mad at it. In many places of this country today, the cheaters no longer bother to hide the cheating, they do it openly and brazenly. In the knowledge that like a husband who has been caught with his pants down by his wife, they can always deny it and insist that, “It is not what you think.” All it takes for charges of cheating in this country to go away, even when backed up by the most ironclad proof—can anything be more ironclad than the “Hello Garci” tape?—is for the charged to deny it to death. Or deny it all the way to the presidency.

On his own, Sarmiento has replied in part to the question of, “What do we do about it?” I still hope he will reply to it in full, resigning his post as commissioner in protest over the obsecenity he had just witnessed and is being made to justify. It doesn’t always take a group of Namfrel volunteers stopping their count and storming out of the tally room in disgust to spark a demand to end tyranny and restore decency. Though it can’t hurt if the more principled men and women of Comelec—surely, there are 10 just people there?—contemplate something along those lines. But one person with a conscience saying “Enough!” is enough to cause a cataclysm. The one thing a tyrant fears most is not the might of the enemy, it is the heart of an honest man.

There is something that spreads faster than the germ of corruption. That is the fire of inspiration.

Teves and Tetangco impress Japanese fund managers

WITH 16 CERTIFICATES OF CANVASS, MOSTLY from the Mindanao area, and about 1.8 million votes still to be tabulated, the senatorial winners—including the top six—cannot be proclaimed yet. The names in the top eight rankings can still change, while those in the 12th to the 15th can also change because their margin of difference ranges from just over 100,000 to 200,000 only. Thus, Mindanaoan Miguel Zubiri and Ralph Recto could end up replacing Antonio Trillanes and Aquilino Pimentel III. The Genuine Opposition realizes this only too well, which is why its protests are getting shriller. For GO, it sounds so much better to claim an 8-2-2 victory, but the ultimate result may be closer to 6-4-2 in GO's favor. The first score would be a wallop, but not the second one.

The turtle-paced count is causing so much tension, and both sides are now trading accusations of cheating. Probably, both sides did cheat in their respective balliwicks. But I'm glad that the Senate is now waking up to the need for electoral reforms, three years ahead of the 2010 presidential and local elections. Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on electoral reforms, was again pushing yesterday for the automation of the election process. Recall that he was campaigning for this in the 13th Congress, but the opposition, led by Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Panfilo Lacson, vigorously blocked his initiative. I think the counting and tabulation, more than the voting, ought to be immediately automated.

Kampi president and reelected Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte's "float" to put up newly elected Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia as a challenger to Speaker Jose de Venecia for the top House post appears to have quickly fizzled out. What it did was to prod House members to troop to JDV's residence one by one and pledge support. It takes 123 votes to win the speakership and JDV's camp now counts 185 pledges, with 160 firmly in the bag. Sources say that aside from the 92 elected Lakas representatives, who are solid for him, JDV has the LP-Atiensa faction led by Rep. Eric

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



Singson, about 10 senior leaders of Kampi led by Iggy Arroyo and Amelita Villalosa, 28 out of the 29 members of the Nationalist People's Coalition led by its president Frisco San Juan and secretary general Jack Duavit, four LDP House members led by Edgar "Sonny" Angara, Bert Gonzales' PDSP which has four House members, and the PDP-Laban led by Makati Rep. Teddy Locsin.

What's significant is that even the Cebuano representatives are with JDV. Cebu City Rep. Antonio Cuenco dropped by his residence at least three times. Rep. Raul del Mar, who is with the President, called from New Zealand to pledge his support. So did Eddie Gullas who called from Hong Kong. But what's even more important is that, the President herself assured JDV some days back, "I'm for you, Joe." As they say, the speakership has only one vote: that of the President.

What this all boils down to is that at this stage when there's a lot of political uncertainties, few House members want to experiment with untried material.

If the Filipino community in Tokyo was impressed by "Superstar Gary" Teves, all the more were the Japanese fund managers satisfied with the presentation he made, together with Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco. The finance team accompanied the President to Tokyo where she keynoted the 13th Future of Asia Conference and made a big pitch for new investments in RP. Some \$1.8 billion in investments and aid were obtained, the biggest being Marubeni's commitment to invest \$1 billion to \$1.2 billion in nickel mining in Surigao del Norte. What impressed the

fund managers was the finance team's upbeat picture of RP's economic and business prospects, despite the political turmoil of which the Japanese are well aware. Teves and Tetangco, in their usual low-key style, assured them that the economic and fiscal reforms will continue. The Japanese noted, however, that the tax collection has not shown much improvement, and the Filipino officials admitted this even as they assured continuing reforms in that regard.

One thing the Japanese fund managers cannot seem to understand is why our Senate has not yet ratified the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa), which was signed by President Arroyo and then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Helsinki last September. Japan has already signed a similar treaty with several countries around the region, like Thailand and Malaysia, but the Senate still has to ratify it. Our ambassador to Tokyo, Domingo Siazon, tried to make light of the non-ratification by saying it was not "a large issue" for the Japanese, but the issue did hit the Japanese papers during the President's visit. I recall that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's political aides tackled it during their press conference in Manila last January.

Jpepa is billed as a "new age free trade agreement." It is supposed to open many doors for RP notably the entry of select Filipino labor (e.g., nurses) into Japan. But the treaty hit a snag even before reaching the Senate after environmentalists expressed fear that Japan might dump its hazardous wastes on RP once the treaty's tariff provisions are in force. The treaty was snowed under by political issues last year, but I'm glad that Abe is bending backwards and has promised to put down in writing his earlier assurance to GMA that Japan would do no such thing. Actually, Abe is having serious problems with his popularity, and I doubt if he'd risk the ire of Japanese environmentalists, who can be more militant than our variety, by dumping such stuff on us.

Disappeared

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



ing, especially the family of Jonas Burgos who disappeared last April. Jonas is the son of the late Joe Burgos who fought for press freedom.

Here are excerpts from the story. Was this so long ago?

"Dig here!" she ordered. "Dig! My son is buried right here where I stand." No one quite believed Henedina Portugal, but when the men shoveled the earth and turned it over, there was her son, Celso, slowly becoming a part of it all.

The place is called Gethsemane, somewhere at the Umalag Crossing ... and many refer to it as the place where "salvage" victims are buried.

Manang Dina herself could not quite explain how she knew her son was buried right there. In prayer she had begged that her son be returned to her. "Where is he? Return him to me," she pleaded.

Her boy Celso was all of 16, in his third year in high school, when he disappeared. He had been missing for two years along with three others ...

It had been a long, painful search. There had been prayer rallies on behalf of the missing, habeas corpus hearings, a letter to military authorities, but all these had yielded minimal results. She then had to find her own leads, track down possible witnesses.

Her two older sons are military men, one a corporal and the other a draftee. They had been very upset about the fate of their younger brother ...

Looking back on the day of the exhumation in Gethsemane, Manang Dina said she was grateful to a lot of people, especially those witnesses who had given her leads ...

In her home are prominently displayed pho-

tographs of Celso. But, she said, "When my older sons in the military come home, I hide the photos. It hurts them to remember their dead brother. Revenge is not yours, I tell them."

"Whose side am I on? I don't know. All I know is that we have not broken any rules. But they call us rebels. If that is what we are, then we are Christian rebels. The church is full of us on Sundays. Who are the rebels—the ones who steal or the victims?" Manang Dina's thoughts turned to Celso: "I raised him, took care of him. When he burned with fever I would rush him to the hospital. But they made him into a raw dish."

In another scene ... another mother. Cry, cry, the women urged her. It is better that you cry. But she wouldn't. Only much later would she let it all out, her sobs intensifying with every thud of the shovel that would give her some pieces of her son.

Ay anak, pastilan anak... she called out, ever so softly ... She was weeping now, painfully beautiful in her sorrow as all mothers are. (I have her lamentations on tape and photographs of her while she waited.) The nuns gently led her to the shade of a coconut tree, while her husband held her close to him.

It rained that afternoon, making exhumation even more difficult. The air reeked with the stench of rotting flesh. Here were lumps of hair, then a piece of bone with flesh on them. Who were these? Where were the skulls? The limbs?

Parang kailan lang, as the song goes. Persons still disappear and are never found.

FIND is an organization of families, relatives, friends and colleagues of the disappeared victims and surfaced (yes!) *desaparecidos*.

Founded in 1985, FIND continues to protest against so-called involuntary disappearances worldwide and helps in the search of the missing. It also helps ease the pain of the bereaved by helping them through livelihood programs and counseling. Contact FIND at mail@find.org.ph or 9210069.

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Islamic democracy

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



ied the region's history. Historian Patricio Abinales, for one, says such proposals are just a thinly disguised effort to perpetuate a traditional leadership that has ill-served its constituents.

In a 1996 article, titled "Islam and Liberal Democracy: Two Visions of Reformation," (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/rwright.htm>), Robin Wright points out that "Islam ... is not lacking in tenets and practices that are compatible with pluralism. Among these are the traditions of *ijtihad* (interpretation), *ijma* (consensus), and *shura* (consultation)."

The real question is: Is the *Shura* fundamentally opposed to the democracy practiced in, and expected of, Filipinos everywhere else?

Filipinos, whether Muslims or Christians, value their elders; and regardless of their faith, many families—be the basic bedrock of all our regional cultures—prefer to arrive at decisions, including those related to voting, by consensus. But that is irrelevant to allegations of fraud; the counting is the primary issue now, and mathematics involves no religion. Other problems—e.g., voter intimidation and bribery—are not unique to the ARMM, they are nationwide. The problem is, the opportunities for getting away with fraud are larger in places at the periphery (geographically and resource-wise) of the nation—like the ARMM—except when the national media and election watchdogs make a concerted effort, as they're doing now, to focus on how voting and counting take place.

Whether Christian or Muslim, local leaders are tempting "preys" to national leaders who want to use them. Local leaders hope that national sup-

port will give them an edge when it comes to their primary goal: to stay in power and deny it, in turn, to their opponents. When an administration has a fighting chance, nationally, there's no shortage of local leaders willing and able to do their part; when an administration faces a public tide of resentment, the fight becomes particularly crucial, and media attention and civic participation can be countered. National and local leaders connive to delay matters so that votes can be manipulated strategically: hence the focus on the Muslim Mindanao provinces where the voting has been delayed, and where local leaders can claim they can deliver blocs of votes, and where media are most hard-pressed to report the real score.

So let's keep our perspective. Islam then, is not, by its nature, fundamentally opposed to, or incompatible with, democracy; though there may be particular interpretations of Islam that are less comfortable with democracy. And so the productive dialogue involves non-Muslims respectfully asking if the tradition of Islam demands the kind of political reexamination Quevedo has proposed.

Wright points out that the debate over Islam and democracy is one that interests the entire Islamic world: "Overall, the obstacles to political pluralism in Islamic countries are not unlike the problems earlier faced in other parts of the world: secular ideologies such as Ba'athism in Iraq and Syria, Pancasila in Indonesia, or lingering communism in some former Soviet Central Asian states brook no real opposition ... Rigid government controls over everything, from communications in Saudi Arabia and Brunei to foreign visitors in Uzbekistan ... also isolate their people from democratic ideas and debate on popular empowerment."

To think of Islam as anti-modern, anti-democratic—and to suggest that because of this, democracy can't be practiced in Islamic societies—is a flawed notion and might actually be a kind of subconscious throwback to the biases and prejudices that have led to troubled Muslim-Christian and Muslim-secular relations

An honorary Filipina

NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE CALLED TO GREATNESS. And few who are called to walk the "less-traveled" path heed the altruistic voices of their inner selves.

She was different. Instead of winning her own rat race back home, or building a family of her own, she left her comfort zone to live in a place she barely knew, in a culture that was totally new to her and in an environment that could never give her the glitz and comfortable life she already had. While a lot of people dream of a better life and eventually lose themselves, she chose to find herself by living in a way that would be remembered by people whose lives she had touched.

YOUNG BLOOD

Kristina Mae R. Ombao

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I barely knew Julia Campbell, the United States Peace Corps volunteer who was found dead in the mountains of Ifugao. But having known how she had served my humble hometown of Donsol in Sorsogon, I found myself despairing over her sudden death. I have heard a lot of good stories about her because she was known by almost everyone in our small town. And beyond, the fact that she went about her volunteer work with much passion and grace, many people in my town were touched by her warmth and amazed by her extraordinary ability to cope with the life in a rural town that was totally different from her own.

Julia stayed in our town for almost two years. She was a volunteer in the public school where my parents teach. Being a journalist, she helped my mother train young campus writers who joined in inter-school press conferences. She taught English to young minds in a school that doesn't have the facilities needed for effective learning. She solicited books to help fill this gap and eventually keep the students' wandering minds working during their idle time.

My mom says that during inter-school writing contests, Julia would also sleep on a mat or a folding bed, without any mattress beneath her back. She didn't want any special treatment. And she never took advantage of Filipino hospitality even if she deserved to be treated that way since the Philippine government was not paying her a single centavo for her services.

Because of all this, I admired her all the more. I salute her altruism and her decision to make a difference in her own little way; for helping other people build their dreams while setting aside her very own. People like her are indeed one in a million.

My mom says that Julia tried her best to fit. She washed her own clothes, learned to buy *pasalubong* for the people with whom she shared a house, tried her best to speak the dialect and attempted to cook the Donsolano way. She loved *laing* and had tried several times to cook the dish without much success, but vowed to create a masterpiece someday. Unfortunately, that time will come no more.

My parents admired her bravery and her ability to defend herself literally from all harm. My mom says Julia could not have been killed by a single person. She knew the art of self-defense and, in her fit frame, she was as strong as a man. She was the personification of the modern and strong-willed woman who doesn't believe that she needs a man to defend her.

Julia was not afraid of living alone, according to my mom. But apart from her courage, she had a heart for service and genuine friendships and that was why she was loved by everyone, from the teachers and the students she taught to the food vendors and tricycle drivers whom she talked with every day. Like the morning sun, she warmed people's hearts with her laughter, her postmodern Bicol with the American twang and her friendly ways.

She amused them with her repeated attempts to adapt to the local culture and to love things the people of Donsol love. She immersed herself in the Donsolano's way of life during her short stay.

I miss Julia, although I never had a chance to personally know her since I was busy with my work and studies in Manila. I miss her maybe because my mom misses her or maybe because it is hard to find another person who had her heart for service. I am saddened by her passing because a person like her, who finds happiness by bringing hope and building a better life for the rest of the world that badly needs it, is rare. Julia was one extraordinary soul, especially for the people who learned to love her and for those who had known her causes.

It is frustrating to realize that good people die young; that good people, who make more sense of their fleeting life on earth by not following the crowd, leave their footprints too soon.

There is a price to pay when a person chooses the path less traveled. Julia paid that price the moment she came to Donsol as a volunteer. She was cherished by the people who, had nothing much to give back to her for her voluntary services. And I feel much regret that despite her good intentions, she was killed in the mountains of Ifugao, a death I consider senseless and unjust. It doesn't matter to me if Julia was an American. For me, she was an honorary Filipina, and a Donsolano because she was deeply loved in that humble town where she had shared her laughter and her hopes.

She may be in God's embrace now. But if indeed there is such a thing as reincarnation, I hope I will meet her in my next lifetime so she can teach me to choose the road less traveled. Then I'll ask her to teach me how to love my country in spite of its seeming hopelessness because though she wasn't a Filipina, she fell in love with some of its people and served them.

I will forever remember her because of the footprints she has left.

Kristina Mae R. Ombao, 26, recently finished her master's in communication at the University of the Philippines in Diliman. She works as an information officer at the Agricultural Training Institute in Quezon City.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Cockfighting is for bullies

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF VISITING THE Philippines for 10 days. It is a beautiful place with wonderful and caring people. My husband and I have also been humbled by the poverty and the plight of so many of its people.

I am an American citizen and there is much to learn from Filipinos and their rich heritage. My husband and I have had the joy snorkeling, sailing and swimming in this country's waters. We have dined with an ambassador and enjoyed food and drink with those in power as well as with those in poverty.

As the elections neared, we watched the Filipinos fight for an electoral exercise that would be honorable and fair for all. It

was very apparent to those of us observing that Filipinos want the respect of the international community.

I am writing this letter to tell Filipinos that the Philippines' reputation as a Third World country will remain if they continue to condone and endorse and host world championships for cockfighting. People who live in a civilized society do not condone the mistreatment of people and animals. They work hard to create and enforce laws that protect the innocent and those who cannot defend themselves. Suffering and abuse is not entertainment, it is for bullies and lost souls.

I am aware that roosters from America

are brought here for the cockfights. It is because, in our country, it is illegal to pit roosters in a fight. I beg the Filipinos to stop this barbaric act and make it illegal. Realize the inhumanity and callousness of cockfighting. Direct your efforts for the children. Redirect, refocus and bring worldwide resources to these efforts. Strive to become a nation of power and respect. Become citizens who can be proud of all your activities.

I pray for great things for the Filipino nation. Choose life for all.

—REBECCA S. WALSH,
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA

LETTERS

Arroyo has no choice but to drop libel suits

THERE IS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE in the decision of the President's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, to drop all the 17 libel cases he filed against 46 journalists. (INQUIRER, 5/4/07)

Arroyo's claim on May 3 that he is dropping the libel cases "to stay in touch with God for giving [me] a new lease on life" and "to make peace with [my] detractors," sounds great as a public relations spin. But the real reason Arroyo is dropping the libel cases is simple: he can no longer afford to pursue them in court because he could die on the witness stand under rigorous cross-examination.

After undergoing the critical heart operation, he needs continuous and intensive medical care for life. This condition renders Arroyo in a "state of disability" with the attendant danger to his life at any stage of his convalescence, rehabilitation and treatment. His doctors' advice to him is that he "could no longer afford to be in the eye of a political storm—or in a situation where he challenges foes to a fistfight."

"The main player in preventing complications will be himself. That's why we keep on reminding him that probably he

has to ignore all things that are noxious. Anything that is not beautiful, something like 'see no evil, hear no evil.' He has to have a high tolerance for stress," his attending physician said. "He cannot easily let himself be carried away by things that would upset him, otherwise his health might be compromised," she added.

When his surgeon was asked if Arroyo was out of danger, he answered: "No, no. That's why we are emphasizing the need to control the factors." (INQUIRER, 5/7/07)

With the avowed withdrawal of Arroyo's libel charges in court, what is the pleasure now of the 46 defendant journalists, each of whom Arroyo would have sent to jail for up to four years?

This question would best be answered by the accused journalists themselves as to whether they will show him mercy or pursue their class-action suit against him and let him face the full consequences of his dastardly acts of assaulting press freedom and harassing innocent journalists.

—JOE SOLIMAN,
president, Kilusan sa Pagtatanggol ng Konstitusyon, Karapatang Pantao at mga Kalayaang Sibil, Malabon City

Insensitive advertisement

THE FULL PAGE AD OF SMARTBRO PUBLISHED in the May 23 issue of the INQUIRER is a distinct manifestation of reckless, convoluted creativity which shows utter disrespect of, if not total contempt for, the oath of allegiance we used to recite every flag-raising ceremony when we were in elementary and high school.

If the purpose of the ad is to be cute, then it has boomeranged; for it cultivates a negative impression for the product and the company. There is a cap to creativity.

It is too glaring and obvious that the format of the message is patterned after the "Panatang Makabayan." From the ad, the reader gets the impression that the company associated with the product and brand is totally devoid of patriotism and loyalty to the country. The ad reflects bad corporate citizenship.

I hope that our lawmakers will also take issue with the ad and come up with a law that will censure and punish such disrespect, which is an insult to every Filipino who still loves this country despite its rough edges and convoluted sense of nationalism like what the ad's copywriter has shown of himself.

I hope this particular ad will be pulled out immediately. And the company's board of directors, as a sign of good faith, should sanction the people who prepared the ad and allowed it to run despite its being tactless and insensitive to the feelings of millions of Filipinos who still love this only country that God has given them.

—VIC DEL FIERRO JR.,
president, Coalition For Consumers Protection & Welfare Inc.,
vdelferro@hotmail.com

What SmartBro ad means

THANK YOU FOR GIVING US THE OPPORTUNITY to respond to the letter sent by Vic del Fierro Jr. While we respect his opinion, we take the view that the SmartBro ad in question does not disparage the Panatang Makabayan.

The ad was intended to convey the message that Smart is seriously committed to provide Filipinos affordable broadband Internet service. We are accomplishing this by utilizing wireless technologies that make high-speed access to the worldwide web much more widely available in more places of the country than ever before.

We are, of course, offering a commercial service. But this does not, in our view, diminish its importance to the national well-being. Virtually everybody today recognizes that the Internet is a vital part of life in the 21st century. It is a valuable resource for business, government, schools and individuals.

By making broadband Internet accessible to more Filipinos, telecom companies like Smart are contributing to the development of the country in a substantial way.

This is indeed a worthwhile commitment. This is our Panatang Makabayan.

—RAMON R. ISBERTO,
head, Public Affairs,
Smart Communications Inc.

JPL's role in saving Roxas

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE LETTER TITLED "Who saved Roxas?" (INQUIRER, 4/13/07) Laurel was instrumental in saving the life of Manuel Roxas.

"The Laurel Story," a book authored by Carlos Quirino, narrates thus: "Col. Nagahama, the burly bespectacled head of the military police, came to the Palace late in 1943 to see the President."

"...Laurel knew that the subject of their conversation would be Roxas, who was present at the meeting of the National Planning Board. 'Please stay, compadre,' Laurel told Roxas."

"Then he went to his office to receive the Japanese officer." (Laurel told Nagahama) "No, you cannot do that. You cannot arrest Roxas." (Page 89 of the book)

"...If you ever lay hands on him, you will have to do it over my dead body!" (Page 90 of the book)

Quirino was director of the National Library. His book was published in 1992.

—ABELARDO JAMES SONICO,
B12 L3 Terrytown, Sta. Rosa, Laguna

On Calma's skills

I AGREE WITH FRANCIS GUEVARA IN HIS letter "Calma deserves recognition." (INQUIRER, 4/27/07)

For bringing honor to the Philippines, Eduardo Calma should be recognized not as a licensed architect but for his skills in architectural designs—just like Manny Pacquiao who is recognized for his skills in boxing.

—TRINIDAD ESTURAS PETEZA,
JP Rizal Street, Barangay Camabugan,
Daet, Camarines Norte 4600



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Seven (7) Achiever Government Agencies or SAGA

The GSIS pays tribute to member-agencies that share the institution's passion for accomplishing and embarking on programs and projects that enhance the lives of public-sector employees and the public they serve. The search for the Seven Outstanding Government Agencies or SAGA was launched to recognize government agencies that have done extremely well in their specific fields of public service.

SEVEN ACHIEVER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



GSIS TURNS 70

A GLORIOUS PAST AND A WORLD CLASS FUTURE



message of the Chairman of the Board

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is a public institution that has been in existence for 70 years. It is a proud member of the Philippine government and a key player in the social security system. The GSIS has a long and illustrious history, and it is a testament to the dedication and hard work of its employees and the support of the government and the public.



report of the President and General Manager

Over the course of the year, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has achieved significant milestones. The Board of Directors and the Management have worked together to ensure the stability and growth of the institution. The GSIS has a strong financial position and a commitment to providing quality services to its members.



MALACANAN PALACE
MANILA

MESSAGE

Warmest congratulations to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) on your 70th year of solid performance and unparalleled stability.

As a pension fund, the GSIS consistently sets the trend by coming up with programs that significantly benefit your active members and pensioners. Benefit packages are continuously reviewed and upgraded to meet the members' growing needs.

The commitment to serve anytime and anywhere is no longer a vision but a reality. Through the GSIS Wireless Automated Processing System (G-W@PS), you have effectively reached out to your members in the country's remotest island provinces, as well as the pensioners overseas.

The recent programs of the GSIS, *Garantisadong Mahabang Amortization na House en Lot Para Sa'yo (GMA-IHELPS)* and *Sats ang Interes sa Lahat (SAIS)*, seek to benefit even non-members. These housing programs, which reduce loan interest rates to as low as 6% per annum, show the GSIS' sincere desire to help improve the quality of life of the Filipinos.

I also congratulate the GSIS for paying tribute to government employees and government agencies who share the same passion for accomplishing and embarking on programs and projects that aim to enhance the lives of the public that you serve.

The GSIS is truly a government institution that leads by example. Indeed, it lives up to its motto, "*Kahit Saan, Kahit Kailan, Matasahan*."

More power and *Mabuhay!*

MANILA
31 May 2007

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

Golden GSIS 70th Anniversary



Results of 2006 Operations

Assets
GSIS' consolidated total assets as of December 2006 amounted to P411.19 billion, P44.19 billion higher than 2005. The marked improvement is drawn from the Social Insurance Fund (SIF), which posted an increase of P43.21 billion, or a growth of 13.0 percent from its 2005 level.

The SIF is the source of the social insurance benefits of GSIS' 1.3 million members, and thus makes up a majority of its consolidated assets.

The Administered Fund, on the other hand, comprises the General Insurance, Employee Compensation, and Optional Life Insurance Funds. By the end of December 2006, the Administered Funds grew to P33.85 billion from P32.88 billion in 2005, or an increase of 3.0 percent.

These improvements reflect the continuing efforts of the management in pursuing the System's reforms that have strengthened the viability of both the Social Insurance and Administered Funds, so that all GSIS members will receive their benefits as and when they fall due.

Income
In a year characterized by the full-scale preparation, leading to the aggressive launching of the G-W@PS and the eCard Plus, the GSIS turned-in good financial results in the performance of both the Social Insurance and Administered Funds, which yielded combined revenue of P84.61 billion in 2006.

As a result, GSIS' consolidated net operating revenues for 2006 was 3.0 percent higher at P41.56 billion - largely the result of increased investment yields and gains on valuation of investment properties, among others.

Reserves and Surplus
A hefty P38.36 billion increase in consolidated reserves was recorded in 2006, as it rose by 11 percent to P376.09 billion in 2006 from P337.72 billion in 2005. Surplus, on the other hand, totaled P23.29 billion in 2006.

Expenses
Expenses for members' claims and benefits, insurance, investments, and administrative and operating expenses totaled P43 billion in 2006.

Life and Retirement Benefits
The GSIS paid a total of P21.39 billion for claims and benefits of 169,570 members in 2006. Retirement and survivorship claims made up 77.0 percent of the total amount paid, or P16.41 billion, benefiting 60,963 members and their dependents. Regular and optional life insurance claims paid up in 2006 reached P4.98 billion.

Old-Age Pension
Old-age pension disbursed nationwide amounted to P8.24 billion for the 152,606 old-age pensioners being serviced by the System, with average monthly pension of P5,887.60.

Annual Dividends and Cash Gifts
The GSIS paid out a total of P 735.0 million in regular dividends to active members and P554.0 million in cash gift to pensioners in 2006. Cash dividends for optional life insurance amounting to P63.21 million were also distributed to 110,424 active members. All dividends were credited to the eCard account of regular policyholders, who enjoyed the convenience of getting their dividend through ATMs, eliminating the need for over-the-counter check encashment. Meanwhile, cash gifts were paid to all old-age, retirement and disability pensioners. The cash gift was equivalent to one-month basic monthly pension up to a maximum of P10,000.00.

Member Loans
The GSIS disbursed a total of P33.34 billion in loans through the GSIS eCard. Total salary loans disbursed to the 281,051 members amounted to P21.31 billion.

Policy loans granted to 439,054 regular policyholders amounted to P8.25 billion, while P1.01 billion was disbursed for the 59,098 optional policyholders.

In 2006, the GSIS increased the amount of emergency loans extended to members who were victims of typhoons and other calamities. Some 47,735 members benefited from the emergency loan, with total disbursed amount reaching P954.70 million.

The Pension Loan Program continued to provide old-age pensioners with a more responsive facility for their needs. There were 33,578 pensioners who availed of the program, to whom a total of P1.19 billion was granted. The year 2005 saw the full impact of the GSIS eCard, and transactions using the multipurpose ID card remained steadfast in 2006. Encouraged by this success, the GSIS pioneered the development of GSIS eCard Plus, equipped with radio frequency identification device (RFID) that allows the processing of loan applications without any documentary requirement.

A second wave of Cash Advance facility was made available to members who enrolled for the GSIS eCard Plus, bringing the total amount of Cash Advances credited to both the GSIS eCard and eCard Plus to P348.45 million by the end of 2006.

The introduction of the Consolidated Salary Loan (or conso-loan) in October 2006 kept the momentum high for the eCard Plus, with a total of P266.26 million disbursed to 2,101 member-borrowers by the end of the year. The conso-loan combined the different GSIS loan windows (salary loan, restructured salary loan, enhanced salary loan, emergency loan assistance, and summer one-month salary loan) into a consolidated loan for easier loan management on the part of the member and the System. Members were also able to avail of condonation since surcharges were not collected from availed with arrearages.

Housing Loans
Under the Bahay Ko Program, 249 loans were approved with a total loan amount of P222.68 million. Majority of the loans availed were used for construction (36.0 percent) and home acquisition (35.0 percent), followed by home combo or the multipurpose housing loan (21.0 percent), home improvement (4.0 percent), and refinancing (4.0 percent).

Another initiative in support of the administration's thrust to provide affordable housing to government employees is the ongoing Amended Rate Reduction and Restructuring Program (ARRRP). It provides opportunity for borrowers to restructure their loans at lower interest rates, easier payment terms, with condoned penalties and interest discounts while enjoying the possession of their homes.

A total of 3,381 individual loan accounts was approved for restructuring in 2006. Members benefited from the condonation of penalties and surcharges which amounted to P145.60 million, and interest discounts which amounted to P85.20 million.

GSIS' Participation in the Housing Fair
The GSIS participated in the Housing Fair organized by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) in the latter part of 2006. The Board approved the lowering of interest rates to six percent per annum, compounded annually (6 percent p.a.c.a.), for purchases of GSIS Acquired Assets and the lengthening of the amortization period to a maximum of thirty (30) years subject to GSIS evaluation. These liberal terms were offered to GSIS members who availed of the loan during the Housing Fair. As of end-2006, a total of 21 housing units were sold in the provinces of Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite, and Batangas, registering a total gross selling price of P23.76 million.

Seven (7) Achievers in Public Service or SAPS

The GSIS recognizes the contribution of its members to society by conducting a Search for the Seven Achievers in Public Service or SAPS. This is the institutions way of honoring outstanding workers in the civil service and contributing to the development of a culture of excellence in government.



Nino C. del Rosario
Education Supervisor I
DEPED - Davao City Division
Davao City



Reimelda C. Raffilian
Local Government Operations Officer VII
Nacional Barangay Operations Office
DILG



Carmen C. Cubrado
Municipal Agricultural Officer
LGU - Pilar, Bohol



Pedro M. del Rosario
Administrative Aide III (Utility Worker II)
Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center
Baguio City



Melecio B. Fernandez
Social Welfare Assistant
DSWD - Davao



Gerry B. Baucan
Teacher III
Alfonso Tabora Elementary School
Baguio City



Arellie C. Jacinto
Public Health Nurse I
DEPED - Division of La Union
San Fernando, La Union

INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

School teaches love for environment

By Ephraim Aguilar
Daraga, Albay

Long before climate change education was suggested to be included in the school curriculum, Sunshine had been teaching its students to plant trees

PAINTED WHITE AND SUR-
rounded by lush scenery, the
four-story school building por-
trays the environmental cause it
has been pushing for 27 years
now.

At the Sunshine International School in
Daraga, Albay, children are taught to be good
stewards of the earth.

School founder and director, Dr. Ofelia
Mesias-Peralta, has entwined two of her pas-
sions—nurturing the environment and teach-
ing children—in one enterprise. Having a
green thumb herself, she says she simply pass-
es on her love for the environment to the
pupils.

Pieces of garbage are segregated according
to their type—biodegradable, nonbiodegrad-
able, or tin cans. A no-littering policy is strict-
ly implemented.

This solid waste management system is
taught to the children, like the kindergarten
game of grouping similar and dissimilar ob-
jects. The non-biodegradable trash are recy-
cled while the biodegradable ones, like dried
leaves, are turned into organic fertilizer to be
used in the school's botanical garden.

Unlike almost all other private schools,
Sunshine, the first homegrown international
school in Bicol, does not hire janitors. The stu-
dents themselves do the cleaning.

"We want to inculcate on these children the
love of work and the value of discipline and
independence," says Peralta, who is popularly
called Teacher Ofel by her students.

The school values, she says, are explained
to the students' parents, who are also encour-



THE SUNSHINE Play Center and Botanical Garden keeps a growing flora collection, where children can add environmental awareness to their play.

PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

aged to partner with the teachers in imparting
these values.

Even long before climate change education
was suggested to be incorporated in the
Philippine school curriculum, Sunshine had

already been teaching its students to plant
trees as the simple and practical means of
solving environmental ills.

The school, which is inside a subdivision in
Daraga town, is far from the vexations of city
life. One can smell the breeze there without
choking from car exhausts. Chirping birds can
be heard from the trees, which students and
parents planted 10 years ago at a nearby
block.

In 1997, the students, their parents and the
school faculty lined up yellow bells and pili
trees along the Magayon Drive, a road leading
to the Legazpi City airport from the school
gymnasium.

Even after the typhoons that ravaged Bicol
last year, motorists can still enjoy a view of the
blooming yellow bells, now that the plants
have recovered from the calamity.

Botanical garden

The school won the Saringaya Award from
the Department of Environment and Natural
Resources in 2004 for its advocacy of environ-
mental preservation and conservation.

It was also given the Gawad Agkatek by the
Clean and Green (Save the Earth Movement)
of the Rotary Club. The same body gave the
school the Award of Sustainability for "con-
tinually creating a major impact to its sur-
rounding community."

Not far from the school is a half-hectare
play center and botanical garden, and another
half-hectare football field, gymnasium, and
prayer garden.

Established in 1990, the Sunshine Botani-
cal Garden keeps a growing flora collection.
The plant species are labeled with their com-
mon and scientific names and the countries
they originated from.

In one corner are pine trees and other
plants from the Solomon Islands, Africa, In-
dia, Mexico, China, Thailand, Malaysia and
other countries.

Aside from the gardening classes, clean
and green activities are common in the school
calendar. The children are brought to the gar-
den once in a while to learn about plant prop-
agation and experience soiling their hands.

Peralta says the play center and botanical
garden were built to provide an alternative
place for families to enjoy a serene, unpollut-
ed park. She advises that the children should
be brought to other places that will make
them more environmentally aware, and not

just to air-conditioned malls and noisy ar-
cades.

The play center has a museum where the
children's artworks and projects, mostly
made of recycled materials, are on display.

The school propagates the use of natural
products that are environmentally friendly,
like organic fertilizer and coconut soap.

Peralta has also concocted a natural insecti-
cide made out of dried "siling labuyo" (chil-
ies) mixed with water.

International students

Since the school has foreigner students, it
seems to have become a prototype of a global
initiative combating ubiquitous environmen-
tal problems. Korean, Canadian, Japanese,
Chinese and Indian students not only learn
English from Filipinos but also environment
preservation.

At present, the school has a small popula-
tion of 300 with only one class per level, each
having 30 students at the most to ensure qual-
ity teaching. It was founded in 1980 as Sun-
shine Nursery School and classes were held at
Peralta's house. The grade school department
was opened in 1986.

Then named the Sunshine Learning Center,
it was accredited as an international school in
2005.

When she was 12 years old, Peralta re-
counts that she used to play "teacher" to poor
children living at the back of their house.

She first taught in 1968 at the St. Agnes'
Academy, the oldest existing school in Albay.
Her 12 years of teaching has greatly honed
her skills because of the good training given
by the German sisters running the Benedic-
tine school.

Her love for the environment she learned
from her parents, Sevara and Salvador
Mesias, both teachers and nature lovers.

"My father was a garden and agriculture
teacher. He was the one who taught me to use
organic fertilizer from decomposed
biodegradable materials," she recalls.

Her mother planted ornamental plants
while her father had his fruit trees. A known
bougainvillea collector in town in the
1960s, her mother had the vastest collec-
tion of different colors of bougainvillea
flowers.

Now, the school awaits expansion as its
high school department will be opened in
2008.

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DR. OFELIA Peralta, 61, runs the Sunshine International School in Daraga, Albay, where she teaches children to love the environment.

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Lagazpi City
Telefax No. (052) 480-4182
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

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Biñan canvass delay keeps Laguna bets in the dark

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—FIFTEEN days after the elections, the Commission on Elections has yet to proclaim the winning officials in Laguna—the governor, vice governor, a congressman and board members—due to the delay in the canvassing of votes in Biñan town.

Dioscoro Pajutan, Comelec Laguna provincial supervisor, said they could not proclaim the winners because the results of the elections in Biñan could still change the overall results of the provincial races.

He said incumbent governor and reelectionist Teresita Lazaro was leading the race with 35,000 votes against incumbent vice governor Edwin Olivarez.

Biñan has 105,000 voters, according to Comelec records, so the number can still change, Pajutan said.

Biñan is said to be the bailiwick of Olivarez.

The Comelec has yet to issue an order whether there was a failure of elections in Biñan or the canvassing will resume.

The canvassing was suspended on May 18 after mayoral candidate Jose Ruben "Cookie" Yatco, son-in-law of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, filed a petition to declare a failure of elections in Biñan allegedly because of irregularities.

Incumbent vice mayor Marilyn Alonte, who is leading in the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) count, also filed a petition to lift the suspension of canvassing in the town.

Alonte said the delay in the canvassing was causing tension.

"We are divided here in Biñan. If the tension does not cease, more people would be threatened and would no longer get involved," she said.

The Roman Catholic bishop of Laguna has called on candidates in Biñan to stop the "excessive bickering" and peacefully resolve the election issue.

In a letter sent to the parish of Biñan, Laguna Bishop Leo Drona said he was alarmed by the "horrendous division that has come to plague the community caused by the disagreements and accusations of various political groups."

"Our country needs people who could stand for the truth and those who protected the sanctity of the ballot last elections deserve gratitude," Drona said.

"Hence, I encourage all the lay faithful (and citizens) of Biñan and all those affected by the crisis to pray and discern, to dialogue with prudence and reason," he said.

The priests in Biñan also issued an official statement which was read in all parishes last Sunday.

The statement said the current situation was caused by accusations made by both political parties.

The priests said both parties should follow due process and not resort to any form of violence. *Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Pampanga village chiefs hide from defeated bets' revenge

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

GUAGUA, PAMPANGA—Several barangay captains in Pampanga have gone into hiding while many feel threatened by the planned reprisals of losing candidates, an official of a communist armed group here said on Wednesday.

Gabriel Soliman, spokesperson of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (Revolutionary Army of the People), made this report as he debunked the initial results of a police investigation that tagged RHB rebels as suspects in the May 28 murder of San Juan Bautista barangay captain Mario "Jomar" Nulud, 48.

Nulud was a supporter of Fr. Eddie Panlilio, the governor-elect of the province.

"That is not true. The RHB has no reason to kill Jomar," Soliman told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "As a revolutionary organization, the RHB was non-partisan in the last election."

"We made a deeper study of the incidents of killings. There are many village chiefs now who are threatened by retaliation as a result of defeat by candidates. Others are in hiding," Soliman said in a text message later.

He cited a number of towns where the supposed climate of fear exists but asked that these not be cited to protect the local officials who claimed to have been used for vote buying.

"The situation could be likened to cheating in a gambling deal," Soliman said.

A village official in Pampanga's



MARIO "Jomar" Nulud (extreme left, with raised fist), who was slain a few days after the elections, leads a rally for Fr. Eddie Panlilio, now governor-elect of Pampanga, in this photo taken before the elections.

TONETTE OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

third district said the fear could be true for those who did not work but only pocketed the money.

"It is true that many village officials made money out of the election," the official said. "They're now afraid."

Soliman said a village official reported that a week after the elections, unidentified men posted a handmade poster at his village's barangay hall with this message: "Marami kaming binigay na pera pero walang nangyari (We gave so much money but nothing happened)."

Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Central Luzon police director, presented sketches of the two suspects in Nulud's killing based on the ac-

counts of the victim's relative.

Rafanan said the "conflicts" that Nulud had with the RHB in the past prompted investigators to consider the members of the rebel group as suspects. He declined to tell what these conflicts were.

Nulud, he said, was a former New People's Army rebel who left the movement and became an activist who was involved in protests against the construction of the Bataan nuclear power plant in the 1980s and labor strikes at the defunct Pampanga Sugar Development Corp. in the late 1980s.

Nulud's wife, Milagros, denied this. "My husband had no enemy

whatsoever. I don't know of any person or group that had a grudge on my husband," she said during the wake held at the Barangay San Juan Bautista chapel.

Josefina Castilla-Go, regional director of the Department of Interior and Local Government, on Wednesday also ordered an assessment of the post-election situation, especially on the plight of village leaders.

"I heard that they received varied amounts but with Among Ed (Panlilio), perhaps the people could not be swayed into voting for other candidates," Castilla-Go said in a phone interview.

Based on the Local Government

Code (Republic Act No. 7160), she said barangay captains should be non-partisan during elections.

"In reality, it can't be helped that they aligned themselves with local political leaders," she said.

Rafanan said the police's investigation on Nulud's murder continued, adding that the case "is fluid now to be making an educated guess [on the motive of the attack]."

He said it was "incidental" that Nulud was a supporter of Panlilio.

Rafanan said the Task Force Nulud has been making an inquiry on the supposed fear among village officials and the planned retaliation against them.

2 teeners held by Army not NPA members, says NDF

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE NATIONAL Democratic Front (NDF) in Eastern Visayas denied that the two minors who are now in military custody are New People's Army guerrillas.

NDF Eastern Visayas spokesperson Fr. Rafael Salas said the two teenagers, a 16-year-old pregnant girl and a 17-year-old boy who are being held by the military, were not NPA members.

The military arrested on Sunday evening a 16-year-old preg-

nant girl on the strength of a warrant issued by Judge Apolinario Buaya of the Regional Trial Court Branch 17.

The girl was said to be a member of the education and medical committees of the NPA Mt. Amantein Northern Leyte Front Command.

The military also announced that a 17-year-old boy surrendered last May 26 to authorities with the help of Mayor Sixto de la Victoria of Albura town, also in Leyte.

Salas urged 19th Infantry Battalion commander Lt. Col. Lope

Dagoy to release the two teenagers to their parents.

In an e-mail sent to the INQUIRER, Salas said the girl had already denied she was an NPA member, which her family affirmed.

Dagoy earlier said the two minors were active members of the NPA, armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. However, he said the 16-year-old girl, during interrogation, denied being an NPA member.

Dagoy said the capture and surrender of the teenagers were

proofs of the NPA's use of minors in warfare.

But Salas said the military, not the NPA, took advantage of minors in warfare.

"The military should stop their nefarious practice of using minors as tools in psychological warfare. They should respect the rights of the children and minors, civilians and others who are not involved in armed hostilities," he said.

Salas said this strategy formed part of the military's overall campaign Oplan Bayan II.

"The 8th Infantry Division

keeps on taking minors into custody and using them as helpless and unwilling props for the worn out deception that the NPA was recruiting minors," he said.

However, Capt. Mario Jose Chico, of the public affairs division of the 8th ID, which is under the command of Maj. Gen. Armando Cunanan, just laughed off Salas' statement.

"What else is new with Salas? He is in complete denial of the existing reality that the NPAs are using minors against us. They have been using minors before and up to now," Chico said.

'Bayanihan' spirit gives Eastern Visayas schools facelift

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—FOR A WHOLE week, volunteers, mostly parents, helped repair and maintain all public schools in Eastern Visayas under the "Brigada Eskwela" program in time for the June 4 opening of classes.

"The concept behind Brigada Eskwela is simply to help the schools maintain their facilities without any expense from the national government," Rebecca Ragrag, education regional information officer, said.

On May 21-26, the volunteers repaired chairs, desks and tables, leaking roofs and dilapidated windows of school buildings. They also solicited donations of nails, paint, lumber and other materials.

"From previous experiences, we saw that Brigada Eskwela is really helping our schools. (The) bayanihan is still in our heart, still in our spirit that we only have to tap people properly and with the right timing and they are ready to help," Ragrag said.



PARENTS and students flock to malls to buy school supplies as they prepare for the school opening this June in Iloilo City.

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

She said the Eskwela Brigada could have started during the time of Education Secretary Florencio Abad or earlier.

Many people are willing to help in the school maintenance if they are just asked to join, she noted.

This year, education regional director Sol Matugas has again launched in the region the "Search for the Most Pre-

pared School" in observance of the program, according to Ragrag.

The contest has the following categories: Small elementary school, big elementary school, school-at-large elementary, small secondary school, big secondary school and school-at-large secondary.

Among the criteria are scope of repair and maintenance work completed (35 percent); donations and material resources generated, which are relevant to school needs (15 percent); volunteers' participation (30 percent); relevance to school needs, uniqueness and innovativeness (10 percent); and overall impact on the physical improvement of the school (10 percent).

Last year, the schools division of Eastern Samar received a special award for registering the biggest number of volunteer parents who participated in the Brigada Eskwela.

Adelaide Garcia, principal of the Rizal Central Elementary School in this city, said her school had benefited much from the program. Among the pro-

jects initiated were the P300,000 covered walk funded by Barangay 25 and the setting up of a water pump and tank at a cost of P100,000, financed by the alumni association, she said.

Garcia said grilled fences were also installed at a cost of P115,000, shouldered by the Parents-Teachers Association, and a P47,000 dental trough, an alumni project.

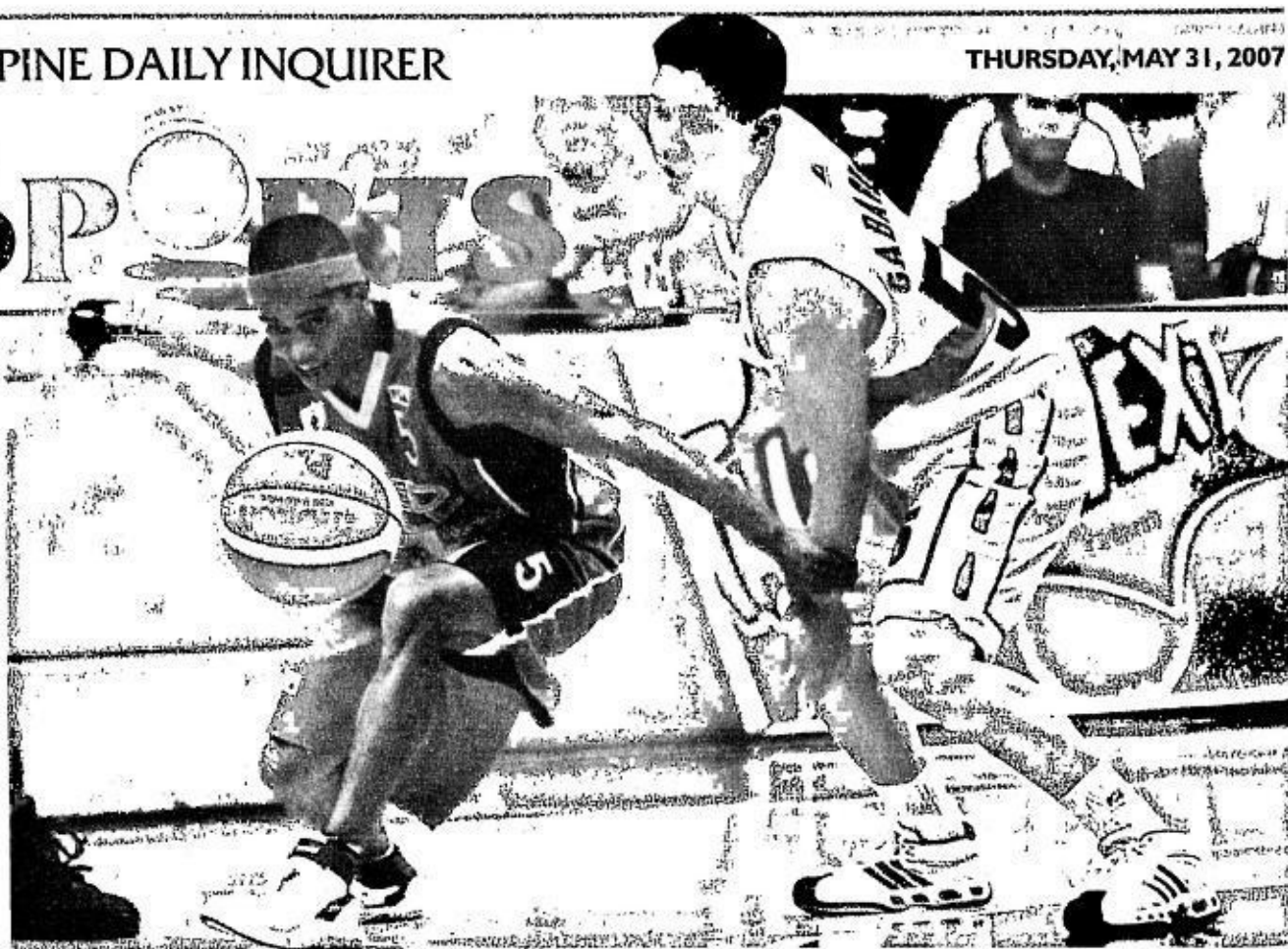
At the Leyte National High School, Daguinod said the chairs and doors, windows and ceilings of different classrooms were repaired.

The Parents-Teachers Association also initiated the flooring elevation of a five-classroom building, which had become flooded during rainy days, he said.

The Department of Education expects an enrollment of some 661,000 elementary pupils and 251,500 secondary students in public schools throughout the region this school year. Eastern Visayas has 382 public secondary schools and 3,585 public elementary schools.

Late **SPORTS**

Bulls trim Tigers, lead way to semis



RED BULL'S Topex Robinson tries to recover the loose ball against the defense of Coca-Cola's Alex Cabagnot. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

"I want to send him love notes oras-oras, gabi-gabi."



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GAMES TOMORROW (Ynares Center)
4:35 p.m.—Welcoat vs Purefoods
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Alaska

By Musong R. Castillo

LEAVE IT TO RED BULL TO put a perfect ending to what had been an imperfect elimination round for the Bulls in the Talk 'N Text-PBA Fiesta Cup.

Red Bull rallied from double-digit deficits in the first half and survived James Penny's early foul trouble to forge a 105-103 decision over Coca-Cola and clinch the first automatic Final Four berth last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

The difficulties the Bulls endured against the Tigers were nothing compared with what the Bulls had to go through in the conference, the most recent of which was the trading of cornerstone Enrico Villanueva two days prior to the team's most important match.

"There was some (emotional) baggage, yes," said coach Yeng Guiao, who himself had to leave the team for 45 days to concentrate on his reelection campaign as Pampanga vice governor in the last elections. "The way we achieved this (No. 1 seeding) was through the hard way. And now, we're in unfamiliar territory because we've never made it to the semifinals (outright) before," he added. "We don't know how to handle this vacation. We have to be able to manage it right so as not to get rusty."

In the second game, Air21 stayed in contention for the other outright semifinal slot—at least, mathematically—after snapping San Miguel Beer's eight-game winning streak with a 109-107 triumph.

Mark Telan scored 27 points and grabbed 14 rebounds while Shawn Daniels had 20, 15 boards and 11 assists for his third triple double of the tournament to lead Air21 to 10-7 after snapping a three-game slide.

San Miguel Beer fell to 9-8.

Penny turned borrowed time into quality time, hitting the Bulls' final four points and grabbing the two most important rebounds of the night as Red Bull closed out its classification schedule with a leading 13-5 card.

The ultra-smart Penny played a total of just 32 minutes after picking up his fourth foul early in the third period. But he made his contributions count heavily, his short stab in the final 15.2 seconds shoving the Bulls ahead to stay.

It was another heart-rending loss for Coca-Cola, which seemed to have found an import that fit the Tigers perfectly.

Rashad Bell was flicking in triples one after the other, but missed what could have been the potential game-winning drive over Penny to doom the Tigers, who finished with a 7-11 card.

"We were actually lucky to come out winning that game," Guiao said. "We never knew anything about their import (Bell) other than what we saw during the game."

Cyrus Baguio led Red Bull with 26 points, just a point shy of his career-high, and Mike Hrabak did a tremendous pinch-hit job in Villanueva's absence by finishing with 15, all but two coming in the second quarter fight-back by Red Bull.

Villanueva was traded to San Miguel on Monday for Romel Adducul, whom the Bulls did not use as Guiao hinted that the 6-foot-5 center may be moved to another team in the coming days.

The scores:

First Game

RED BULL 105—Baguio 26, Hrabak 17, Penny 13, Alvarez 12, Fonacier 10, Robinson 9, Sharma 6, Valenzuela 6, Bugla 4, Cruz 2, Membere 0, Najorda 0.

COCA-COLA 103—Bell 39, Callmag 13, Peek 13, Tolomia 11, Cabagnot 9, Antonio 6, Arigo 5, Yeo 4, Duremdes 2, Pacana 1, Avenido 0.

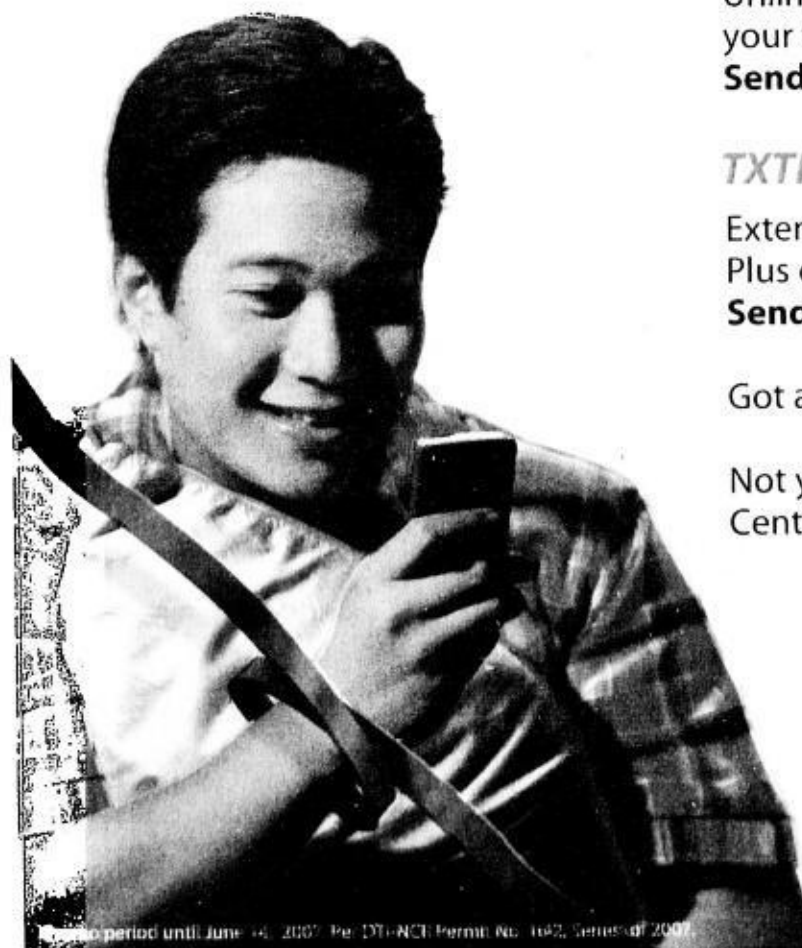
Quarters: 20-34, 52-56, 78-76, 105-103

Second Game

AIR21 109—Telan 27, Daniels 20, Arboleda 17, Santos 15, Canaleta 12, Dimanahan 8, David 6, Iorion 4, Andaya 0, Se 0.

SAN MIGUEL 107—Idelfonso 30, Young 17, Pena 17, Calagulo 14, Racela 10, Tenorio 5, Wilson 4, Villanueva 4, Calay 4, Gonzales 2, Adriano 0.

Quarters: 23-31, 53-56, 90-84, 109-107



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P25-M BANK SCAM Estafa raps vs 2 PNB officers

By Jeannette I. Andrade

TWO FORMER BANK EXECUTIVES AND THREE OF THEIR alleged accomplices, including a university professor, are facing charges of large scale estafa and swindling filed by the Philippine National Bank for allegedly defrauding the bank of P25 million from pre-terminated time deposits of the University of the Philippines.

In the complaint filed in the office of the Quezon City Prosecutor, the PNB—represented by UP Diliman branch assistant manager and regional review officer Malou Francisco—charged Rosemarie Ann Pamplona, the branch's former junior sales and service officer, and Evangeline Domingo, a former senior sales and service associate, as well as alleged accomplices UP College of Statistics professor Joyce Raymond Punzalan; Jamie Santos; and Ely Zonda Clemente, of conspiring to defraud the bank of P25 million.

Francisco claimed the respondents "fraudulently" pre-terminated time deposits of UP Diliman to claim the amount which they deposited in at least three accounts belonging to Santos and Clemente.

Two of the accounts held P8 million each and the third, P9,148,980.94.

The unauthorized pre-termination of the time deposit account was allegedly discovered after the university sent a written instruction to the bank on Feb. 28 to terminate one of its existing time deposit accounts.

Accounts for Santos and Clemente were allegedly created to receive P25 million from the terminated UP Diliman time deposit account. Punzalan's checking account was also renamed in Santos' favor.

To cover up the pre-termination of the time deposit, Pamplona and Domingo allegedly "manipulated" bank transaction journal entries to conceal what they had done.

Punzalan, in a counter-affidavit, ESTAFA/A20

WHITE-COLLARED KINGFISHERS, BLACK-naped orioles and blue-tailed bee-eaters. Who says you can't see any of these spectacular feathered beauties in the busy, polluted metropolis?

Contrary to what most city dwellers believe, there's more to the urban eye than the once ubiquitous *maya*—which has also been noticeably disappearing from the streets.

According to Michael Lu, president of the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines, there are actually more than 100 species of birds in Metro Manila alone.

"These birds, wary of humans who trap and hurt them, are very shy and thrive in selected areas in the metropolis," Lu told the INQUIRER.

He explained that the club has identified good birding sites in Metro Manila, and these are located on school campuses of the University of the Philippines in Diliman and Ateneo de Manila University on Katipunan Avenue, graveyards like the American Cemetery in Taguig City and undeveloped reclamation sites in Parañaque City.

"We identified these areas shortly after forming

For those who want to go bird watching, some tips from the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines:

- Be patient. It takes minutes, or even hours, for the birds to come out in plain view. Being impatience would only ruin the whole experience, according to Michael Lu, the group's president.
- Do not wear bright colors or it might distract the birds. Earth tones like brown and green are preferable.
- There should be no shouting or sudden movements during the bird watching activity. "Just talk in low voices or point at the birds you see," Lu advised.
- Just watch with your binoculars, don't catch. Wild birds are meant to be in the wild. Hunting for sport or food could also disperse birds infected with avian flu and make the healthy ones vulnerable.
- The best time to go bird watching is early in the morning or late in the afternoon.

the club in 2003," Lu explained. He recalled that it was by taking out a map and identifying the green areas in the metropolis that they were able to discover the wealth of feathered species still thriving

despite the rife urbanization.

"We also found out that there are many, many kinds of birds in the Philippines which are not shown in our school textbooks," Lu said.

There are actually 580 species of birds in the country, 30 percent of which are endemic or found nowhere else in the world, according to Lu.

"Sadly, if you show their pictures to people, they cannot identify these birds," he added.

Lu, a businessman, said he was inspired to form a bird watching club after he came by chance upon a book, "The Birds of the Philippines," showcasing the country's feathered wildlife five years ago.

"As a child, I was a nature lover. I was baffled why there were not that many wild animals in the provinces I went to during summer," Lu recalled, laughing.

"I was surprised to learn that there were actually pelicans in Laguna Lake in the early 1900s," Lu said. "I wondered if I would ever see these birds. It was then that I decided to join an environmental organization," he added.

But Haribon Foundation's annual bird watching WATCH/A20

Watch, not catch wild birds in the city

By Margaux C. Ortiz



CATTLE egrets take to the air at the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City. (Inset) Scaly-breasted Munia at the Hardin ng mga Rosas, also in UP Diliman. PHOTOS BY RAUL MANCULO

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Arrest warrant issued against Boratong's wife

By Kristine L. Alave

A PASIG CITY REGIONAL TRIAL COURT issued yesterday afternoon warrants of arrests for the wife of suspected illegal drugs market operator Amin Imam Boratong and his alleged henchmen.

Ordered arrested by Judge Nicanor Manalo Jr. of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 161 were Memie Sultan Boratong, PO2 Ramil Along, and Nashir Labay for allegedly killing GMA 7 informant German Colisao in 2005.

Boratong, who is also a respondent in the case, is detained at the

National Bureau of Investigation.

No bail was recommended for the respondents as they are facing charges of murder, a heinous crime.

Manalo issued the order despite the May 23 decision of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez absolving the respondents and overturning the findings of State Prosecutor Geronimo Sy.

Gonzalez said there was insufficient evidence to pin down the suspects in Colisao's death. He also questioned the credibility of witness Samer Palao. The police, who feared Gonzalez's ruling would undermine the case, was heart-

ened by the judge's decision.

Just because Gonzalez cleared the Boratong couple of murder, did not mean the court could immediately dismiss the charges, said Roque A. Merdegia Jr., chief legal officer of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force.

He cited the Crespo vs. Mogul case in the 1970s where a decision of the then justice secretary was dismissed by a judge.

He said it was the discretion of the court if the trial should proceed or not. Merdegia added they would urge the judge to continue with the trial and dismiss the manifestation filed by defense lawyer

Raymond Fortun.

In his 10-page Omnibus Motion submitted to the court yesterday afternoon, Fortun said the case against Boratong and his wife should be dismissed as the government's main witness, Palao, was not credible and that there were many loopholes in his statement.

In his testimony, Palao said the Boratong couple ordered Colisao's killing after the GMA 7 informant was discovered taking video footage of the shabu market in Pasig on Nov. 14, 2005. Police said Colisao was killed on Nov. 17, 2005. His body, with three gunshot wounds, was

dumped on a Pasig street.

Fortun said there was no probable cause to indict his clients as Palao "was not an eyewitness to the crime. In fact, he never saw the alleged killing."

Palao, who claimed to be Boratong's right hand, said the suspect owned the shabu market in Barangay Sto. Tomas that was raided and demolished last year.

Fortun also cited Gonzalez's decision to withdraw the information for the murder case against the respondents.

Manalo ordered Merdegia and Sy to comment on Fortun's manifestation in 10 days.

Estafa raps ...

From page A19

denied any knowledge of the transaction. "It is obvious that I am also a victim of these illegal activities of Rosemarie Ann Pamplona and Evangeline Domingo, who evidently conspired and connived together with senior officers of the PNB in falsifying bank documents, particularly my checking account in order to defraud the bank of the amounts herein alleged, by using among others, my supposedly 'closed checking account' without my knowledge much less consent," he said.

Punzalan denied knowing neither Clemente nor Santos, but said Pamplona was a classmate at the Statistical Center in UP where he took up a MS Statistics course. Pamplona had introduced him to Domingo, he said. It was Pamplona who convinced him to open a time deposit account which he changed to a checking account on the bank executive's suggestion, Punzalan added. Pamplona and Domingo are reportedly in hiding.

PNB president Omar Mier said the bank had sought a hold order to stop Pamplona and Domingo, longtime and reportedly model employees of the bank, from leaving the country. *With Doris C. Dumlaog*

Marina offices in Manila destroyed in early morning fire

By Tina G. Santos

AN EARLY MORNING FIRE RAZED the offices of the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) in Manila early yesterday morning.

The blaze, which started around 4 a.m., gutted several floors of the seven-story Philippine President Lines Building, owned by Manila Bulletin chair Don

Emilio Yap, at the corner of United Nations Avenue and San Marcelino Streets.

Marina is an agency under the transportation department, tasked to oversee the shipping industry.

No one was reported injured in the fire, which was still ongoing as of press time.

But around 5:37 p.m., Manila fire marshal Supt. Pablito Cordeta

said that the blaze, which reached Task Force Delta, was already under control.

"It's a confined fire, meaning it will no longer spread to adjacent establishments," he said.

Cordeta said they have yet to determine the cause of the blaze.

He said the fire started at the building's Room 515. It destroyed Marina's overseas shipping, do-

mestic shipping and administrator's offices, which were all located at the fifth floor.

From the fifth floor, the fire spread across the entire building completely destroying the fifth, sixth, seventh and second floors and partially destroying the third and fourth.

Only the ground floor was spared, Cordeta said, adding that

the firefighters were ill-equipped to deal with the blaze.

Some 50 fire trucks from Manila and neighboring cities and municipalities responded to the alarm.

Portions of United Nations Avenue were closed to traffic as the heat intensified, forcing firefighters to use breathing apparatus to get near the building.

Club to the aid of Bocalbos family

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A FILIPINO-CHINESE ORGANIZATION which donated P200,000 to the family of slain Makati City deputy chief of police Superintendent Jovem Bocalbos hopes his death would "open the eyes of the legislators to the sad plight of police officers in the country."

The Philippine-Chinese Charitable Association Incorporated (PCCAI), represented by its chairman of the board and president Dr. James Dy, also offered free hospitalization and treatment to Bocalbos' widow, Maria Cristina, and the couple's three children at the Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center.

Dy has likewise included in his organization's donation a full nursing scholarship at the hospital's College of Nursing and Liberal

Arts for Bocalbos' 12-year old daughter, Jill Christie after she graduates from high school.

"We salute Superintendent Jovem Bocalbos for his clean, honest and humble service," he said. "Supt. Bocalbos is a good example for others to follow," Dy said.

Dy added that he hoped the donation would start the ball rolling for a campaign for fallen PNP personnel, "especially good cops who take on other jobs in their free time to support their family through honest work."

He pointed out that the PCCAI had always been active in providing benefits to police officers' benefits, particularly in terms of free hospitalization at the CGH as well as monetary donations to the heroes of the PNP who have been injured or are killed in the line of duty.

From page A19

activity was not enough for Lu. With another companion from the organization, he decided to explore Metro Manila for possible birding sites.

Their first bird watching "expedition" at Ateneo amazed Lu. He and his companion found out that there were at least 10 species of birds on the campus.

"I remember listening to my friend in disbelief when he excitedly told me about a woodpecker sighting," Lu said with a laugh.

Keen on finding other bird enthusiasts, Lu searched the Internet and was disappointed to find out that most articles about local birds were written by foreigners. However, he felt a glimmer of hope when he chanced upon an online bird watching forum where some Filipinos were participants.

"I sent e-mails to all the Filipino participants, asking them if they wanted to go bird watching with me," Lu said. A year after, the Wild Bird Club was formed.

"We realized that we had to form an organization for people to talk to us and treat us seriously especially whenever we would go to other places," Lu said, adding that he was also encouraged to form the club by British bird watchers.

From only a few members, the club eventually expanded as word about their activities spread. The organization now has more than 100 members, with ages ranging from 8 to 80, according to Lu.

Club vice president Alice Villa-Real, a human resource development officer, said she joined the organization after an accidental encounter with a blue bird in the countryside.

Villa-Real, who is also into astronomy as a hobby, was fiddling with her refracting telescope in Batangas when she saw an astonishing sight.

"The bright blue bird was just flying around, practically within reach. I had never seen anything like it," she recounted. It was a pivotal moment for Villa-Real, who at that moment became a bird en-

thusiast.

Upon reaching home, she immediately went to a bookstore and looked up books on the subject. In "The Photographic Guide to Philippine Birds," she learned the name of the beautiful bird she had just spotted—a white-collared kingfisher.

Not contented, she searched the Internet for related topics and found the club's web site. She immediately became a member after contacting Lu, she said.

"Bird watching is a good way to relax and appreciate the wealth of bird species we have in the country," Villa-Real said.

Aside from weekly bird watching trips for all the members, the club also conducts a guided trip for the general public once a month.

"The trip is free; interested bird watchers only need to pay a P50 rental fee for the binoculars if they do not have their own," Lu said.

The club also maintains records of the number and kind of bird species seen on each of their trips, according to its president.

"At first, our maintenance of a bird database was just for fun," the Wild Bird Club president said. He explained that they would take note of the migratory and resident birds seen on each bird watching activity.

However, what started as a hobby eventually became a serious task for the bird watchers. Lu said that an inquiry with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) a few years ago showed that the government has no records of bird populations in Metro Manila.

"We just wanted to cross-check our data on Manila Bay birds with the DENR but they said they had no information on birds thriving in the area," Lu recalled, adding that the club then contributed their first data on birds found in Navotas and Parañaque.

He added that the DENR had kept records of bird species in 70 sites throughout the country but none in Metro Manila.

"Apparently, people never identified Metro Manila as a possible bird habitat," Lu said. "They were surprised when we told them that the average number of birds we have seen in Parañaque was 5,000 in one morning."

Lu said the mangrove island behind Coastal Mall in Parañaque is a rich bird habitat. At low tide, a variety of birds would perch on the mudflats and feed on crabs, shells and fish.

"Between the Coastal Mall, Macapagal Boulevard and that area, I was surprised to note more than 100 species, 70 percent of which are migratory," Lu said. He explained that the migratory birds flock to the Philippines to escape from the cold winters in China or Siberia.

The club's database on birds again proved invaluable when they were asked to provide data to the DENR on the coastal lagoons of Las Piñas and Parañaque.

"Last March, we wrote Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes and asked him to help save the lagoon," Lu said.

Last April 20, Lu said the DENR chief called up the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau and asked them to make the proper documentation on the birds thriving in the particular site.

"On Earth Day, April 22, President Macapagal-Arroyo declared the lagoons a protected area," Lu said, smiling.

With the proclamation, the 175-hectare area spanning the two southern Manila cities will be known as the Las Piñas-Parañaque Critical Habitat and Ecotourism Area.

Lu said it was an award that the club received from the World Bank as an "environmental champion" in 2004 that prompted them to create other important activities such as the annual Philippine Bird Festival and the Raptor Watch.

The annual festival, first held in November 2005, was conceived to educate children and the general public on the different species of birds in the country and the importance of preserving their habitats.

Crusaders fight lonely battles

BUHAY, THE PARTY LIST THAT GOT the highest number of votes, is reportedly wracked by infighting.

There are two factions in Buhay: One led by the son of El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, the other, by the son of former ambassador and National Labor Relations chair Roy Señeres.

Both factions are claiming their nominees should represent the anti-abortion advocacy group in the House of Representatives.

The first group is composed of Christian Señeres, a magna cum laude graduate of a US university and incumbent Buhay representative; Hermenigildo Dumlaog, former education undersecretary; and Antonio Bautista, law professor at the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University.

Rene Velarde, also incumbent Buhay congressman and second in command in his father's dynastic religious group; Maria Carissa Coscolluela, once an official of the Population Commission that distributes condoms and promotes vasectomy, which are contrary to Buhay's pro-life advocacy; and Erwin Tieng, son of a wealthy businessman.

The Commission on Elections will have a difficult time deciding which group should represent Buhay.

Both Velarde and Señeres represented Buhay in the last Congress.

Under the law, the party-list groups that get at least two percent of the total

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

votes cast for party-list are entitled to one representative in the House of Representatives. The groups that get four percent are entitled to two seats; and those with six percent of the total, three seats.

Buhay got more than six percent of the total votes cast for party list, so all three candidates are assured seats in the lower house.

But which group—Señeres' or Velarde's—still remains to be seen.

In this age of fastfood, people don't care about what goes into the food they eat.

All they care about is a full stomach after they partake of junk food. Little, if at all, do they care about the poison contained in the junk food.

Take a look at the nutrition contents of a regular cheeseburger in a fastfood chain: fats, calories, carbohydrates, sodium, monosodium glutamate, cholesterol. And then more carbohydrates, more fats, more calories, more sodium, and more cholesterol.

In the long haul, junk food will

take a toll on your health.

Former US President Bill Clinton reportedly had a heart bypass for constantly eating cheeseburgers.

A woman cancer-survivor wants to help in promoting health by advertising in a broadsheet enjoining fastfood restaurant owners to tell their customers the nutritional value of the food they eat.

You know what she got? A threat.

Here's the text message she claimed she received from the owner of a multinational fastfood chain in the country: "U have a bad sense of business ethics. U can just talk to us. Your ad is done in bad taste and all fast food (sic) is going to fight you. Pull it out asap (as soon as possible)."

"Kuya Mon, how can you call promoting good health among our people bad business ethics?" the woman said.

I told her that fighting a crusade is not a walk in the park. Brickbats and threats and even physical harm are part of the territory for standing by one's principles.

Most of the time, crusaders fight lonely battles and their word is not immediately given credence.

Look at Claro M. Recto whom people hated for his anti-US stance. They came to realize Recto was right only after his death.

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THURSDAY, MAY 31, 2007

The WORLD

A1

Asia, Europe fail to agree on climate targets

HAMBURG—CHINA SAID ON TUESDAY it will not be tied to targets on cutting carbon emissions as Europe and Asia failed to agree at a 40-nation meeting on how to fight global warming.

Beijing wants the developed world to take the lead in cutting emissions, allowing Asia to seek economic growth and fight poverty, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said at a press conference to conclude the Europe-Asia meeting (ASEM) of foreign ministers.

"The developed world should do more but China will do its best," he said.

"We believe that in fighting climate change we should have a common goal but differentiated responsibilities," he added, quoting from a declaration adopted at the meeting.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said Europe and Asia had failed to agree on how to fight global warming on an equal footing after 2012 when the Kyoto Protocol which limits greenhouse gas emissions runs out.

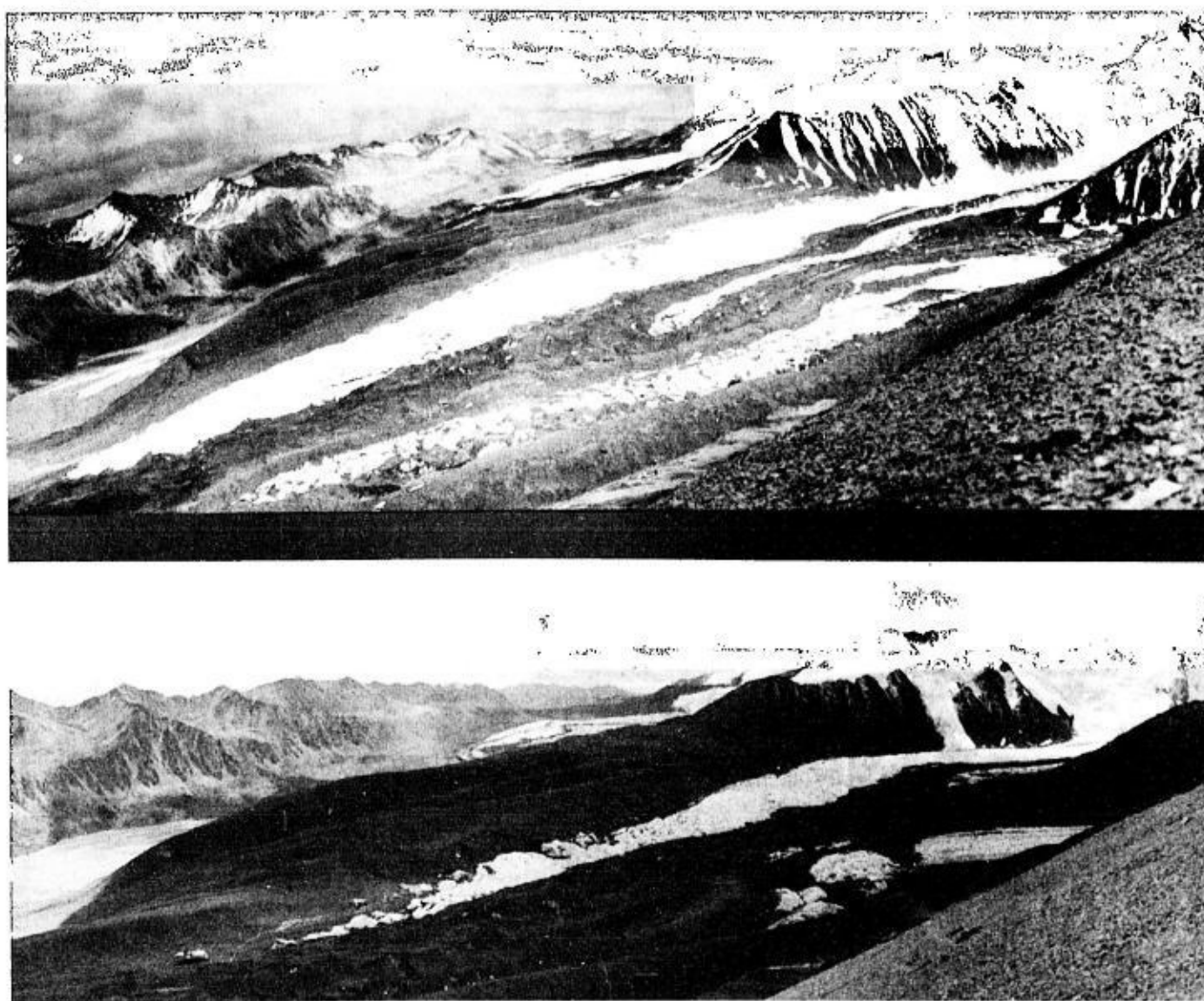
"There were disagreements on setting binding targets," Steinmeier said.

However, he said they had agreed that a new protocol on cutting emissions to succeed Kyoto must be agreed by 2009.

Germany had sought to use the ASEM meeting to rally support on climate change and other international issues before it hosts the summit of the Group of Eight most industrialized countries in Heiligendamm next week.

But Chancellor Angela Merkel's hopes to get world leaders to issue a strong resolution on fighting climate change have fizzled out in a row with Washington.

The United States also rejects the idea of setting mandatory targets on greenhouse gas emissions, as well as language



A COMBO photo one taken in 1981 (top) and the other 2005, shows the retreating Halong Glacier of the Animegen Mountain on the Tibetan plateau. China's rugged Tibet plateau, seen as a sensitive barometer of world climate conditions, is experiencing accelerating glacial melt and other ecological change, as the mountainous region's glaciers have been melting at an average rate of 131.4 square km per year over the past 30 years.

calling for G8 nations to raise overall energy efficiencies by 20 percent by 2020.

Merkel said last week that bringing Asia's emerging giants to the table was vital and she has invited both India and China to take part in discussions in Heiligendamm.

India, a new member of ASEM, said on Monday that it will not be tied to emission targets because this would slow economic growth and hinder its efforts to fight poverty.

Foreign ministers from the EU and Asia put up a united front in Hamburg however on Iran's contested nuclear program and issued a clear call on Burma's (Myanmar) military rulers to free opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

The junta last week said the Nobel peace laureate, who was thrown into detention after her party won elections in Burma in 1990, would remain under house arrest for another year.

The ministers called for "the early lifting of restrictions placed on political parties and the early release of those under detention, including Aung San Suu Kyi." In one of 60 bilateral meetings on the sidelines of ASEM, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso directly confronted his Burma counterpart Nyan Win on the issue of Aung San Suu Kyi.

On Iran, the EU and its 18 Asian partners "expressed great concern and disappointment" over the findings of a report issued this month by the UN atomic watchdog warning that Tehran could be three to eight years away from producing nuclear weapons.

The ministers urged Iran to stop uranium enrichment, work with UN inspectors and resume negotiations to settle its standoff with the international community peacefully.

China's former food, drug chief meted death



ZHENG

AFP

BEIJING—CHINA SENTENCED THE former head of its food and drug watchdog to death on Tuesday on corruption charges for accepting bribes in return for granting approvals for hundreds of medicines.

The sentence by a Beijing court comes as China scrambles to assert control over its chaotic food and pharmaceutical industries following a series of public health scares from Chinese-made products.

Zheng Xiaoyu, 62, looked haggard and despondent as a pair of court security officers clapped a pair of handcuffs on him following the verdict announcement

in footage aired by state television.

The former director of China's State Food and Drug Administration accepted 6.5 million yuan (\$850,000) in bribes, state-run Xinhua news agency quoted the court as saying.

"(Zheng's acts) greatly undermined the uprightness of an official post and the efficiency of China's drug monitoring and supervision, endangered public life and health and had a very negative social impact," the court said, according to state media.

Among the consequences of Zheng's actions, the court said six bogus drugs received approval by his agency.

One Chinese firm is alleged to have bribed Zheng to grant approvals for 277 medicines, most of them high-profit antibiotics, according to previous state media reports.

China's consumer product quality-control systems have been called into serious question recently due to incidents ranging from fake drugs to chemical-tainted food.

Zheng's downfall is a key step in reinventing the country's chaotic pharmaceutical industry, said Chen Zhonglin, a law professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law in Chengdu.

"For many years, surging medicine

prices and a market awash with fake drugs have been linked to Zheng's unlawful and disorderly time in office," he said.

"Many drug prices are now 100 times higher than production costs and many people can't afford them. Addressing this is vital." It was not immediately known whether Zheng planned to appeal the sentence, but law experts said it was unlikely to change.

The stiff sentence could be a sign of official determination to head off growing concern, both domestic and international, over continuing health and safety fears.

Japan seeks to lower high suicide rate

TOKYO—THE HANGING DEATH of Japan's farm minister this week grimly illustrated the country's stubbornly high suicide rate—and the government's struggle to discourage large numbers of Japanese from killing themselves.

Toshikatsu Matsuoka, 62, hanged himself in his apartment on Monday just before he was to face questioning in parliament over a series of scandals that have rocked the government since he took office last September.

With that act, Matsuoka became

one of the more than 30,000 Japanese who kill themselves every year—the second-highest suicide rate in the industrialized world. Japan's suicide rate per 100,000 people stood at 25.5 in 2003, compared with Russia's 38.7, according to World Health Organization figures.

"We are facing a kind of crisis," said Takanori Suzuki, a Cabinet Office official in charge of suicide prevention. "Our previous measures were not effective ... and we will have to move quickly."

More than 32,500 Japanese took their own lives in 2005, up 0.7 per-

cent from the year before, according to the National Police Agency's latest statistics.

Japan has long been known for having a tradition of suicide, but the numbers exploded to over 30,000 a year in the late 1990s amid a long economic slump that forced mass restructuring at companies—and drove many men in their 50s to kill themselves.

Those numbers have remained high despite the economic recovery, leaving officials bewildered. The government set up programs to counsel the depressed and increase

awareness of mental illness to no avail.

The sense of crisis has only been heightened in recent years with the increasing incidence of group suicides arranged among strangers over the Internet. The victims often drive a car to an isolated spot, seal the windows and asphyxiate themselves with fumes from a small charcoal burner.

Last June, parliament enacted a law to bolster prevention, setting up Suzuki's department at the Cabinet Office to work on suicide reduction measures.

Woman on oxygen dies after company cuts power

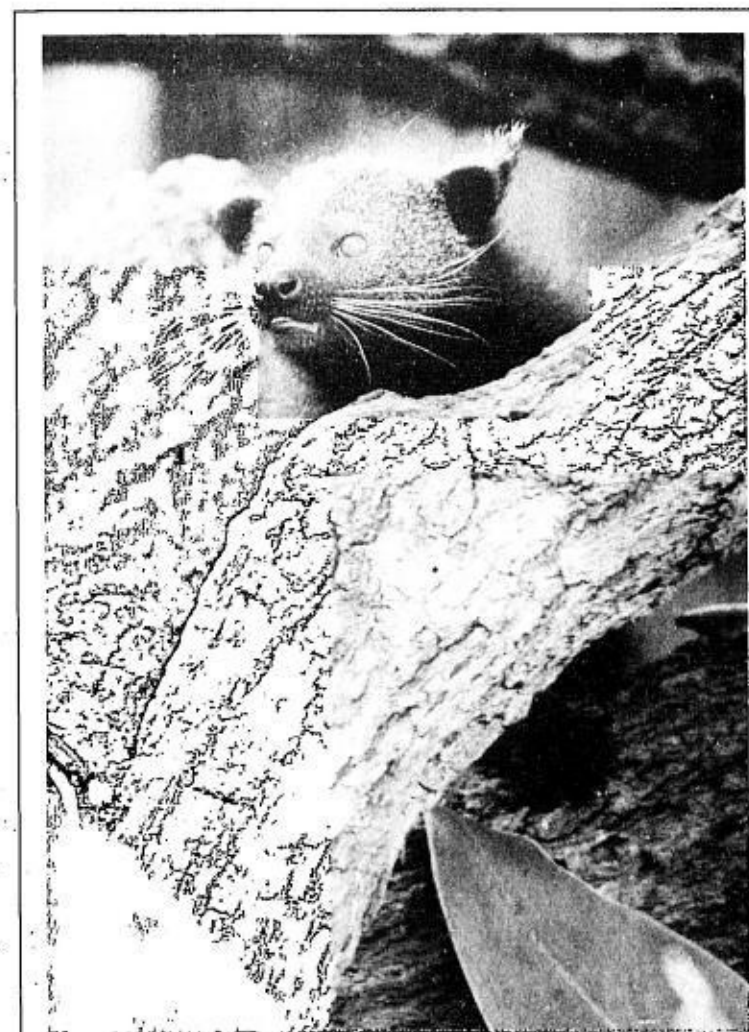
WELLINGTON—A NEW ZEALAND mother who needed an electric oxygen pump to breathe died after a utility company cut the power to her home because she owed them 168.40 New Zealand dollars (US\$122), her family said on Wednesday.

Police said they launched an investigation into the death of Polole Muliaga, 44, on Tuesday in the northern city of Auckland, which occurred less than two hours after state-owned company Mercury Energy cut power to

her house.

Mercury Energy's general manager, James Moulder, said the company was devastated by the woman's death and was conducting its own investigation to determine what happened.

Muliaga, a schoolteacher with four children aged 5 to 20, had been off work since February with an illness and fell behind in her payments to Mercury, said Brendan Sheehan, a relative of Muliaga's who provided a copy of the bill.



ENDANGERED

A female cub Binturong named "Indah" (beautiful in Malay) explores her enclosure at Sydney's Taranga Zoo on May 30. Indah is the first Binturong to be bred at the Zoo with her parents Pepper and Emas who arrived from Singapore Zoo in 2005 to lead a breeding program as Binturongs are highly endangered in parts of their range.

Iran won't stop nuke work

TEHRAN—IRAN WILL NOT SUSPEND uranium enrichment, the key UN demand in a nuclear row with Tehran, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said the day before talks with the EU's Javier Solana.

"Suspension is not a solution to Iran's nuclear issue ... Iran cannot accept suspension," Larijani told reporters at a Tehran airport before his departure.

"We have no conditions and we are ready for constructive talks but we will not accept any preconditions. We are ready to remove concerns over Iran's atomic issue," Larijani meets Solana, the EU foreign policy chief leading discussions on

behalf of world powers, on Thursday in Madrid.

Previous meetings have failed to persuade Tehran to obey UN resolutions demanding that it halt enrichment, a process which the West believes Iran is seeking to master so that it can build atomic bombs. Tehran denies the charge.

The UN Security Council has imposed two sets of sanctions on Iran since December for its failure to heed UN demands. The United States, which has led efforts to isolate Iran, has threatened further steps.

Iran insists its program is aimed at generating electricity.

WORLD BRIEFS

'Condom King' bags \$1M prize

WASHINGTON—Thailand's "Condom King" will receive a \$1-million award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on Thursday on behalf of the group he founded to promote family planning and AIDS prevention. Mechai Viravaidya, the founder and chair of the Population and Community Development Association (PDA), will be presented with the 2007 Gates Award for Global Health at a health conference in Washington, the Gates Foundation said. The \$1-million award, which honors "extraordinary" efforts to improve health in developing nations, is the world's largest prize for international health, according to the Gates Foundation. PDA's achievements include playing a pivotal role in establishing Thailand's national HIV prevention campaign in 1991, which led to an 87 percent reduction in new infections of the virus that causes AIDS, the Foundation said.

Malaysian woman loses appeal on religion

PUTRAJAYA—Malaysia's top secular court on Wednesday rejected a woman's bid to be legally recognized as Christian after converting from Islam, saying the matter must be decided by a religious court. Lina Joy, 43, had sought to have the word "Islam" removed from her national identity card but the Federal Court threw out her case, deciding that only an Islamic sharia tribunal could legally certify her conversion. Joy, an ethnic Muslim Malay born Azlina Jailani, had argued she should not be bound by the Islamic courts because she is now a Christian. Islam is Malaysia's official religion. More than 60 percent of the nation's 27 million people are Muslim Malays.

7 foreigners get death penalty

JAKARTA—An Indonesian court sentenced on Tuesday two Europeans and five Chinese nationals to death for running a large ecstasy factory outside the capital Jakarta, a court official said. The Supreme Court ordered the sentences against a French and a Dutch national who were found guilty late last year of producing dangerous substances, said court spokesperson Djoko Sarwoko. Dutchman Nicolaas Garnick Josephus Gerardus, 61, and French national Serge Areski Atlaoui, 43, have not yet been informed of their sentence, he said. Five Chinese nationals were also given the death penalty after they were convicted in a separate trial last year of helping organize production of drugs at the same factory, said Sarwoko.

Chavez defends TV closure

CARACAS—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez vigorously defended on Tuesday his decision to close a television station that openly opposed his government, and ridiculed demonstrators who protested the move. Lashing out at the "capitalist" values broadcast by Radio Caracas Television (RCTV), which was shut down on Sunday, Chavez claimed that demonstrations of support for the network aimed to destabilize the country. "Sound the alarm in the hills, neighborhoods and towns to defend our revolution from this new fascist attack," Chavez said in a televised broadcast. His comments came as thousands of students took to the streets in the sixth straight day of protests against RCTV's closure.

Mother hangs herself, 3 children

HUDSON OAKS—A 25-year-old Texas woman apparently hanged three of her small daughters and herself in a closet in their mobile home, rekindling nightmarish memories in a state that has witnessed several cases in which mothers murdered their own children, authorities said Tuesday. A fourth child, her 8-month-old daughter, was rescued by the woman's sister and survived, Parker County Sheriff Larry Fowler said. Authorities did not immediately identify the dead children, ages 5, 3 and 2. "It's horrendous. That's all I can say," Fowler said. All, including the 8-month-old, had been hanged with strips of clothing and sashes, he said. The woman was identified as Gilberta Estrada, 25.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Zoellick to replace Wolfowitz at World Bank

WASHINGTON—ROBERT ZOELICK, A Goldman Sachs executive who has built contacts around the globe as President George W. Bush's trade chief and as America's No. 2 diplomat, is the White House's choice to be the next World Bank president.

Bush was to announce the decision on Wednesday, according to a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity in advance of Bush's announcement.

Zoellick, 53, would succeed Paul Wolfowitz, who is stepping down

on June 30 after findings by a special bank panel that he broke bank rules when he arranged a hefty compensation package in 2005 for his girlfriend, Shaha Riza, a bank employee.

The controversy led to calls for



ZOELICK

AFP

Wolfowitz to resign from the poverty-fighting institution.

A seasoned veteran of politics both inside the Beltway and on the international stage, Zoellick is known for pulling facts and figures off the top of his head. He also has a reputation for being a demanding boss.

Bush's selection of Zoellick must be approved by the World Bank's 24-member board.

The bank's board in a statement late Tuesday made no mention of Zoellick by name and noted that any executive director could nomi-

nate a candidate. The board said it was essential that the next president, among other things, have "political objectivity and independence."

Zoellick announced last June that he was leaving his post as deputy secretary of state to join the Wall Street firm of Goldman Sachs and work to develop investment markets around the world.

If ultimately approved as World Bank chief, Zoellick will need to regain trust, rebuild credibility and mend frayed relations inside the institution as well as with its member

countries around the world.

All those matters are critical for the bank's new leader, who will have to persuade countries to contribute nearly \$30 billion over the next few years to fund a centerpiece bank program that provides interest-free loans to the world's poorest countries.

"The test of Zoellick is whether he manages to turn around the bank, which has been in huge disarray," said Elizabeth Stuart, senior policy adviser for Oxfam International, a group involved in helping the world's poor. AP

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5 Britons kidnapped in Baghdad

BAGHDAD—GUNMEN IN POLICE UNIFORMS and driving vehicles used by security forces kidnapped five Britons from an Iraqi Finance Ministry office, and a senior Iraqi official said the radical Shiite Mahdi Army militia was suspected.

Compounding the fresh evidence of chaos in Iraq, the US military announced on Tuesday that a total of 10 American soldiers were killed in roadside bombings and a helicopter crash on Memorial Day, making May—at 113 fatalities—the third deadliest month of the war.

In the Finance Ministry attack, about 40 heavily armed men snatched the five Britons from an annex and sped away in a convoy of 19 four-wheel-drive vehicles toward Sadr City, the Mahdi Army stronghold not far away, according to the British Foreign office in London and Iraqi officials in the Interior and Finance ministries.

Joe Gavaghan, a spokesperson for Montreal-based security firm GardaWorld, confirmed that four of its security workers and one client were kidnapped. All four GardaWorld workers are British citizens, he said, declining to provide more details.

A spokesperson for BearingPoint, a McLean, Virginia-based management consulting firm, said one of the company's employees, apparently the client referred to by Gavaghan, was among those abducted.

"We have been informed that a BearingPoint employee working in Iraq was taken from a work site early this morning," Steve Lunceford, the BearingPoint spokesperson, wrote in an e-mail to AP.

A senior official in the Iraqi Interior Ministry confirmed the five were British and that Mahdi Army militiamen were believed responsible.

Maj. Gen. Abdul-Karim Khalaf, the Interior Ministry spokesperson, said the abduction was carried out by men wearing police uniforms who showed up at the Finance Ministry data collection facility in 19 four-wheel drive vehicles of the type used by police. He said the band of kidnappers sped off across the Army Canal to the east. Sadr City, the Shiite Mahdi Army stronghold, is directly east of the Canal. AP

Russia tests new missiles

MOSCOW—RUSSIA TESTED NEW STRATEGIC and tactical missiles, flexing its muscles amid military disputes with the West and bitter opposition to a US plan for a defensive shield in Europe.

First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov said Russia tested an intercontinental ballistic missile on Tuesday that is capable of carrying multiple independent warheads and a tactical cruise missile with an increased range, boasting that the weapons can penetrate any missile defense system.

"As of today, Russia has new tactical and strategic complexes that are capable of overcoming any existing or future missile defense systems," Ivanov said, according to the ITAR-Tass news agency. "So in terms of defense and security, Russians can look calmly to the country's future."

President Vladimir Putin and Ivanov, a former defense minister seen as a potential Kremlin favorite to succeed Putin next year, repeatedly have said Russia would continue to improve its nuclear arsenal and respond to US plans to deploy components of a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic—Nato nations that were in Moscow's front yard during the Cold War as Warsaw Pact members.

Russia has bristled over the plans, vocally dismissing US assertions that the system would be aimed at blocking possible attacks by Iran and saying it would destroy the strategic balance of forces in Europe.

"We consider it harmful and dangerous to turn Europe into a powder keg and to fill it with new kinds of weapons," Putin said on Tuesday at a news conference with Portuguese Prime Minister Jose Socrates. AP



WHAT'S INSIDE

■ James, rookie help Cavaliers forge tie /A26

SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

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Sulaiman says Pacquiao 'scared' of Marquez

FILIPINO SUPERSTAR MANNY PACQUIAO "IS scared" to face World Boxing Council super featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez.

World Boxing Council (WBC) president Jose Sulaiman declared this after receiving a letter from Pacquiao last week where the Filipino declined his mandatory status to challenge Marquez for the title.

"Pacquiao has a mouse in his shoe. After he knocked down Marquez three times, the latter rose to give him a boxing lesson," said Sulaiman in an interview with boxing website Boxlatino.

Sulaiman was referring to their first meeting on May 8, 2004 when the Filipino decked the Mexican three times in the first round before Marquez rallied to salvage a split draw that allowed him to keep his WBA/IBF super bantamweight title.

The WBC top honcho also indicated that perhaps Pacquiao "does not know that he could have received 50 percent of the bid as the challenger" had he participated in the purse bid for the fight.

Apparently, the WBC was ready to waive its 75-25 rule in favor of the champion in an event of a purse bid, knowing that Pacquiao is the more popular fighter than Marquez.

Three mistakes

With the decision not to accept the fight with Marquez, it was noted by Boxlatino that Pacquiao had now committed three mistakes in his career: first, having signed a contract with both Golden Boy Promotions and then Top Rank; second, having ran and lost in the political arena, and third, declining the fight with Marquez.

Despite the letter, Sulaiman said the WBC will still wait for the June 18 dead-

line for the free negotiations to come up with a concrete understanding between the two camps.

The WBC's executive secretary Mauricio Sulaiman, in a separate interview with Boxnoticias, said "somebody" was giving bad advice to Pacquiao, adding that the WBC Board of Governors will soon decide who will replace Pacquiao as mandatory challenger to Marquez.

Fighter of the year

The Filipino icon is set to fly to the US to confer with promoter Bob Arum regarding his next fight, before heading to New York to receive his 2006 Fighter of the Year Award from the Boxing Writers Association of America (BWAA).

Pacquiao will be at special ringside when his younger brother Bobby dukes it out in a ten-round scrap with Mexican toughie Humberto Soto, who has been groomed by Arum to be next in line for the "Pacman."

Meanwhile, Marquez promoter Jaime Quintana, in an interview with leading boxing website boxingconfidential.com, maintained that the biggest fight available out there for his ward are rematches with Manny Pacquiao and Marco Antonio Barrera.

"Boxing fans are not interested in seeing Juan Manuel fight with (Humberto) Soto," Quintana told Boxing Confidential via phone. "I think the fights for Juan Manuel are rematches with Pacquiao or Marco Antonio Barrera."

Quintana, who owns the Romanza Gym in Mexico, promotes both Juan

Manuel and Rafael Marquez, arguably the most talented brother tandem in the history of the sport.

Condes seeks world title

In other developments, International Boxing Federation (IBF) minimumweight champion Muhammad Rachman of Indonesia knows just what he's up to when he faces Filipino challenger Fernando Condes on June 16 in Jakarta.

But he remains confident he will eventually knock out his young foe in their 12-round showdown.

The Rachman-Condes mandatory fight has been sanctioned by the New Jersey-based IBF and is one of the highly anticipated bouts in the lower weight divisions.

No less than IBF championship chairman Lindsey Tucker of the United States will be at ringside to supervise the bout.

Martinez Dos Santos, who manages the 35-year-old Rachman, said in an interview yesterday that his ward has been working very hard under the watchful eyes of trainer Terry Joe in a beach and mountain in Blitar, Jawa Timur.

Dos Santos, who is currently in Miami, Florida attending the IBF's annual convention, added that Rachman has already logged more than 100 rounds of sparring, saying, "he wants to win by KO."

While he concedes that Condes is the stronger fighter, Dos Santos said that Rachman has "many strategies and tactics to beat Condes."

Rachman (61-5-5, 31 KOs), nicknamed "Rock Breaker," humbled Filipino challenger Benjie Sorolla via a seventh-round TKO in Jakarta in his last bout last December. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

IS MANNY Pacquiao really scared to face Juan Manuel Marquez? WBC president Jose Sulaiman thinks so.



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FOUR of the members of the RP Team committee (from left): PBA commissioner Noli Eala, RP-San Miguel team manager Robert Non, Red Bull's Tony Chua with PBA chair Ricky Vargas.

RP five committee charts final push to Japan today

By Francis Ochoa

THE FIVE-MAN RP TEAM COMMITTEE meets today to plot the final changes to be implemented as the national squad approaches the tournament that mattered most: The Fiba-Asia men's championship in Tokushima, Japan late July.

Among the changes that the meeting will tackle are reinforcements for the team roster and coaching staff, the addition of a team doctor and the realigning of the budget poured into the squad's war chest.

"It's going to be a free-flowing meeting where we will have to make sure that we enforce the changes needed to give us the best possible chance to book a ticket to the Olympics," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala of the meeting that will be held at the PBA office at lunch.

Eala, PBA chair Ricky Vargas, Red Bull team manager Tony Chua, RP-San Miguel team manager Robert Non and national coach Chot Reyes, who was scheduled to arrive from Thailand late last night, are the members of the committee.

Roster and coaching staff changes are expected to present a sticky problem to the committee, although Eala is confident the members can reach a compromise of sorts.

"They key is to strike a balance," he stressed. Eala will bat for the inclusion of Ginebra tactician Jong Uichico, Ateneo coach Norman Black and Alaska mentor Tim Cone—all former national head coaches—to the team, saying this was part of the original proposal when the national squad was formed.

"We will see what happened to that proposal

and why none of those names are on the coaching staff," Eala said. Reyes' assistant currently are Nash Racela and Aboy Castro.

The committee will also discuss roster changes, something that even Reyes said was needed for the Japan joust, which will serve as the qualifying tournament for the Beijing Olympics.

Just after ruling the Southeast Asian Basketball Association men's championship and booking a slot to Tokushima, Reyes said the RP roster wasn't etched in stone and that he was seriously looking at Alaska's Willie Miller, Sta. Lucia's Kelly Williams and Filipino-American Gabe Norwood, the 6-foot-4 starting point guard of George Mason U when it made a surprise run into the US NCAA Final Four two seasons ago.

"The problem is we made a gentleman's agreement with the PBA teams that after we form the national team, we will no longer touch their lineups," Eala said. "We have to talk with the teams again or see which players will be available at the end of June."

Eala hopes the new team members can be fitted into the squad before the team leaves for Chinese Taipei to join the Jones Cup on July 2.

"By then, it will be close to the PBA finals so there will be a lot of players available for the national squad," he explained.

Eala has also strongly vouched for a team doctor to be included in the RP-San Miguel squad to monitor foremost the diet of the Nationals. He said Red Bull has offered its doctor, John Lim, for free.

Budget will also be discussed with the committee hoping to fine-tune the alignment of funds.

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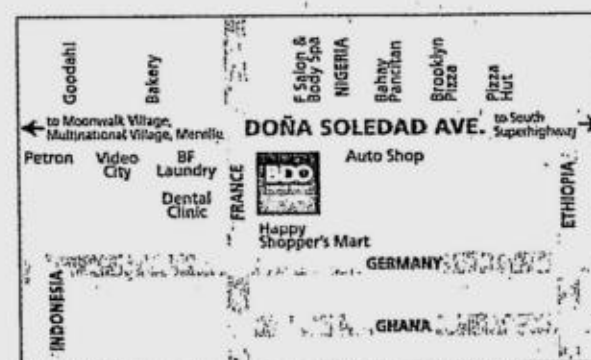
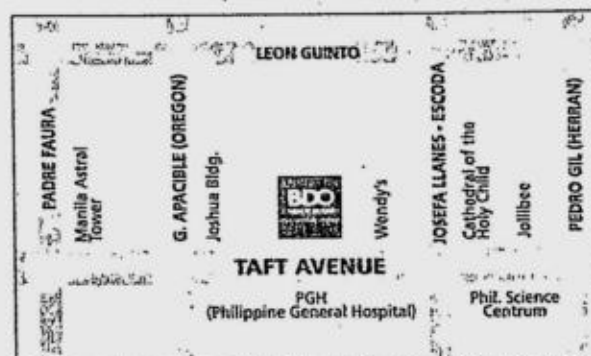
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Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
KOREAN AIRLINES CO., INC. 124 G/F LPL Plaza Levisite St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Sang Wook Han	Cebu Regional Manager
FIRST ADVANTAGE PHILIPPINES, INC. 11/F NOL Tower, Commerce Ave., Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Sigma Alpharius Lamhot	Multilingual Screening Associate
FUTURE PERFECT BUSINESS ENGLISH SPECIALIST 4/F Mappre Insular Corporate Ctr., 1120 Acacia Ave., Madrigal Business Park, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Marilyn Jane Duncan-Webb	Language Consultant
EURO-ASIATIC SHIPPING, INC. Suite 1001 Don Alfonso Cond., 1108 L. Guerrero St., U.N. Ave., cor. M.H. del Pilar, Ermita, Manila	Maysa Niyazova	Executive Secretary
BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO (PHILIPPINES) LIMITED 22/F Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Jeremy Clayton Flint	General Manager
AMBERGRIS SOLUTIONS PHILIPPINES, INC. 31/F Discovery Centre, 25 ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Won Kyung Lee	Korean Customer Interaction Associate
PHILIPPINE BILLION STRONG MINERAL CORP. No. 50 Lapu Lapu St., Magallanes Village, Makati City	Peiyue Gao	President
INNOS MULTI-DYNAMIC CORPORATION Unit 518 Cityland Shaw Tower, Shaw Blvd. cor. St. Francis St., Mandaluyong City	Myung Sic Hong	Supervisor
XCELERATE CENTER, INC. (GSV SERVICES) 169 dela Costa St., 10/F Unit B, Salcedo Village, Makati City	Mark Paul Apletree	Assistant Operations Manager
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CASPO, INCORPORATED 10/F, PBCOM Tower, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Hoe Siong Teoh	IT Support Staff
SDV MARITIME CORPORATION 1511 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila	Kang U Nam	Owner's Representative
ADEC PHIL-GLOBAL SOLUTIONS INCORPORATED Don Mariano Lim Industrial Complex, Alabang Zapote Rd., Las Pinas City	Adrian George Chandy	General Manager
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SPORTS

THURSDAY,
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Do-or-die for Burger King, Toyota today

GAME TODAY (Olivarez Sports Center)
3 p.m.—Burger King vs Toyota Balintawak

BURGER KING WILL BE PUSHING ITS LUCK further against a Toyota Balintawak squad trying to end its misery.

That is the main plot when the Whoppers and the Road Kings collide in today's rubber match for the last semifinal slot of the PBL Unity Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center.

The Burger Whoppers managed to nullify the Road Kings' twice-to-beat advantage last Tuesday, forcing a deciding game at 3 p.m. following a 73-68 win Tuesday.

The winner moves up against No. 1 seed Cebuana Lhuillier in the semifinal playoffs starting Saturday. Defending champion Harbour Centre and Henkel Sista will clash in the other semis duel.

Burger coach Lawrence Chongson said his wards are motivated by their rousing win the last time around when gunners Jim Viray, JR Quinahan, Mike Bravo and Nestor David combined in an explosive fourth quarter run.

"I have to credit my players' resolve for the win. I challenged them to face the (Road Kings) head on. We have known how tough the Toyota players are," said Chongson.

The win was the Whoppers' second consecutive over the Road Kings, who are bidding to



JOSH Urbiztondo (left) and Earn Saguindel (partly hidden) hope to lead Burger King past Toyota with the same scrappy play they showed here against Eder Saldua and Henkel Sista. ENRIK ARAZAS

end a four-game losing streak despite the presence of last year's MVP Joe Devance.

The 6-foot-7 Devance is norming 14.5 points and eight rebounds a game but, ironi-

cally, has not blended well with the Road Kings.

"It's not yet over," Toyota Balintawak coach Ariel Vanguardia said. Marc Anthony Reyes

Lady Pirates try to keep slate clean

LYCEUM TRIES TO KEEP ITS UN-beaten slate while San Sebastian College wants to keep within striking distance of the surprise

leader in the Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

Lyceum tangles with Adamson at 3 p.m., with its sights set on a 5-0 slate while the latter wants to barge into the win column after two losses.

The Lady Pirates, seven-time WNCAA champions, relied mainly on their starting crew to outclass Far Eastern University last Tuesday, 25-19, 25-17, 29-31, 25-19.

San Sebastian, currently occupying joint second place with idle

Ateneo at 2-1, meets FEU in the 1 p.m. opener.

The SSC spikers dealt idle tournament defending champions La Salle Lady Archers a 25-17, 25-12, 25-16 defeat late Tuesday night.

FEU, the winningest UAAP women's volleyball squad with 10 championships, including three straight from 2000 to 2002, has just one win to show after three games.

In the 5 p.m. schedule, defending UAAP champion University of Santo Tomas tries to improve on its 1-1 standing against Letran College, which has yet to win after three games. Romina S. Austria

STANDINGS	W	L
Lyceum	4	0
San Sebastian	2	1
Ateneo	2	1
La Salle	2	2
UST	1	1
FEU	1	2
Adamson	0	2
Letran	0	3

GAMES TODAY (The Arena)
1 p.m.—San Sebastian vs FEU
3 p.m.—Lyceum vs Adamson
5 p.m.—UST vs Letran

Adamson scores 3rd straight victory

UNBEATEN ADAMSON SCORED its third straight win, 25-10, 25-5, 25-12, over Philippine Christian University of the Philippines in the 2007 National Inter-Collegiate volleyball championship Tuesday night at the RTU gym in Mandaluyong City.

The Lady Falcons, who also beat Saint Louis College, 25-14, 25-15, 25-14, on the same day, now enjoy the top spot. The Santo Tomas U Tigresses, who defeated Saint Jude College, 25-14, 25-15, 25-13, are in second place.

In the other women's results, University of Cordillera

improved to 2-1 after beating luckless World City College (0-2), 25-16, 25-12, 25-15, while University of the Philippines trounced the RP team's 16-and-under girls squad, 25-21, 25-21, 25-15.

In the men's side of the event organized by the Philippine Volleyball Federation, Perpetual crushed Philippine Women University, 25-14, 25-15, 25-15; Central Colleges of the Philippines whipped SLC, 21-25, 25-19, 15-25, 27-25, 15-13; and UST won over PCU-Dasmariñas, 25-23, 25-15, 20-25, 25-12.

RP five committee charts final push to Japan

From page A23

"Our budget is not a bottomless pit," said Eala. "We have to make sure that we spend our money wisely and not abuse the generosity of the likes of [main RP team bankrollers] Mr. [Danding] Cojuangco and Mr. [Manny V.] Pangilinan."

Planned foreign trips will be put under scrutiny, partly for budget

reasons and partly because some of those trips may be not as effective as others calendared in the Asian basketball scene. For one, a trip to a Qatar tournament was scrapped in favor of the Jones Cup.

"If there are items in the budget that we feel might not be needed, then maybe it's time to scratch them off the list," Eala explained.

Today's meeting is important because it is expected to chart the national squad's final approach to Tokushima, with guidelines and decisions reached there expected to be the blueprint for the country's bid to make it to the Olympics.

"We're cramming as it is," Reyes had said earlier while in the Seaba tilt in Thailand, stressing the lack of

time needed to whip up a competitive team that will battle the traditional Asian heavyweights for a ticket to Beijing.

The champion of the Fiba-Asia tilt gets a slot in the Olympics. If China wins the tournament, the second-placer also goes to Beijing because China is already seeded into the quadrennial meet as the host nation.

New Seaba cage champs home

ABOARD THE PAL FLIGHT TO MANILA LAST Tuesday afternoon, national cager Mick Pennisi could already manage to smile.

Not a wide grin, but a smile nevertheless. Mick said the pain and swelling around his wisdom tooth which had tortured him for the last 12 days are almost gone. He promised to see a new dentist that one of his teammates recommended to arrange for an extraction.

The RP team continues its training journey on Independence day to Europe where it will stay for a couple of weeks and then return to Manila. In July the Nationals leave again for Taipei to participate in the Jones Cup, in lieu of a tournament in Qatar late June which they cancelled.

Both right upper and lower wisdom teeth will have to go, according to the likeable and meek Mick.

While we were talking, Ranidel de Ocampo, who was seated beside him, was listening intently, as if there was something serious we were discussing. I asked Mick if he thought Ranidel—the resident standup comedian and entertainer of the RP team—was a good singer.

Mick said his teammate is a much better player than a singer, which is why he is recommending that he stick to basketball.

Also on board the PR 732 flight that afternoon was a huge, sterling silver cup which was hand-carried by one of the RP team's staff. It was the trophy won by the Nationals in the Seaba men's championship which served as their ticket to the Fiba Asia Men's Championship in Tokushima, Japan, this July.

The trophy gleamed as light from the windows reflected on its smooth, shining

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis



the Philippines.

Although Harbour head coach Junel Baculi has yet to form the SEAG team practically from scratch, Junel is confident that we can regain the title.

Junel and chief scout Louie Alas were sent by Mikee to Ratchaburi to scout what could be the same cast which we will face in the SEAG.

Mikee also sent cameraman Albert Tirona to take footages of the games.

While in Bangkok on another mission, Welcoat team owner Terry Que and PBA governor Tony Chua, who succeeds Ricky Vargas as PBA chair next season, motored to Ratchaburi to watch the last game against Thailand and to show their support for the Nationals and fellow-governor Robert Non of San Miguel who is also the team manager of the RP squad.

The Seaba delegation held an impromptu press conference upon arrival at the Centennial airport where television crews from various stations were waiting.

Despite the fatigue and heavy downpour that welcomed us in Manila, I made good my promise to San Bada Sea Lions team manager James Sy. From the airport, I headed straight for the Dragon Gate restaurant along Roxas Boulevard where a dinner and turnover ceremony were scheduled that night for his victorious and bemedalled swimmers that competed in the Hong Kong Mantas Invitationals recently.

The dozen or so medals were presented by the swim team—a five-year champion in the NCAA—to San Bada president Reverend Fr. Mateo De Jesus, who was very pleased.

Sevillano tops Los Angeles chess tourney

US-BASED FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL Master Enrico Sevillano emerged champion in the Open section of the Lina Grumette Memorial Day Classic chess tournament held May 26-28 at the LAX Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, California.

Sevillano held Armenian IM Andranik Matikozyan into a draw in the last round to finish with five points from four wins and two draws in the six-round tournament.

Matikozyan, the event's champion in

2005, wound up in a tie for second place with Joel Banawa, Alexandre Kretchetov and Leonid Furman with 4.5 points apiece.

Also figuring prominently is 11-year-old Filipino-American Austin Hughes who topped the reserve section.

The victory also marked the third time Sevillano won the annual event, emerging sole winner in 2004 and sharing the title last year with the late Polish GM Alexander Wojtkiewicz.

In a press statement sent to the Ac-

tive Chess Center of Asia yesterday, Sevillano said he was pleased with how he played in the tournament, particularly his win over American IM Jack Peters in the penultimate round.

Peters is another three-time winner of the event and writes a long-running chess column for the Los Angeles Times. He ended up tied in eighth spot with eight others with 3.5 points each.

The soft-spoken Sevillano attributes his success to his stint in the recent US Chess Championship in Stillwater, Ok-

lahoma, where he finished in the middle of the standings. "I learned a lot from the US Championship and I guess, I still had the momentum going into this tournament," Sevillano told Chess Asia.

Sevillano, originally from Cebu City but is now domiciled in Tehachapi, California, won the Asian Junior championship in 1986. He played for the Philippine team in the Chess Olympiads of 1992 and 1994. **Marlon Bernardino, Contributor**



ENRICO Sevillano: Making his mark in the US.

Omar, Brian rule pairs tilt, earn trip to St. Andrews

OMAR DUNGCA AND BRIAN DONATO ARE going to St. Andrews, Scotland for a dream golfing trip at the home of golf after topping the Lufthansa International Pairs national finals recently at the Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

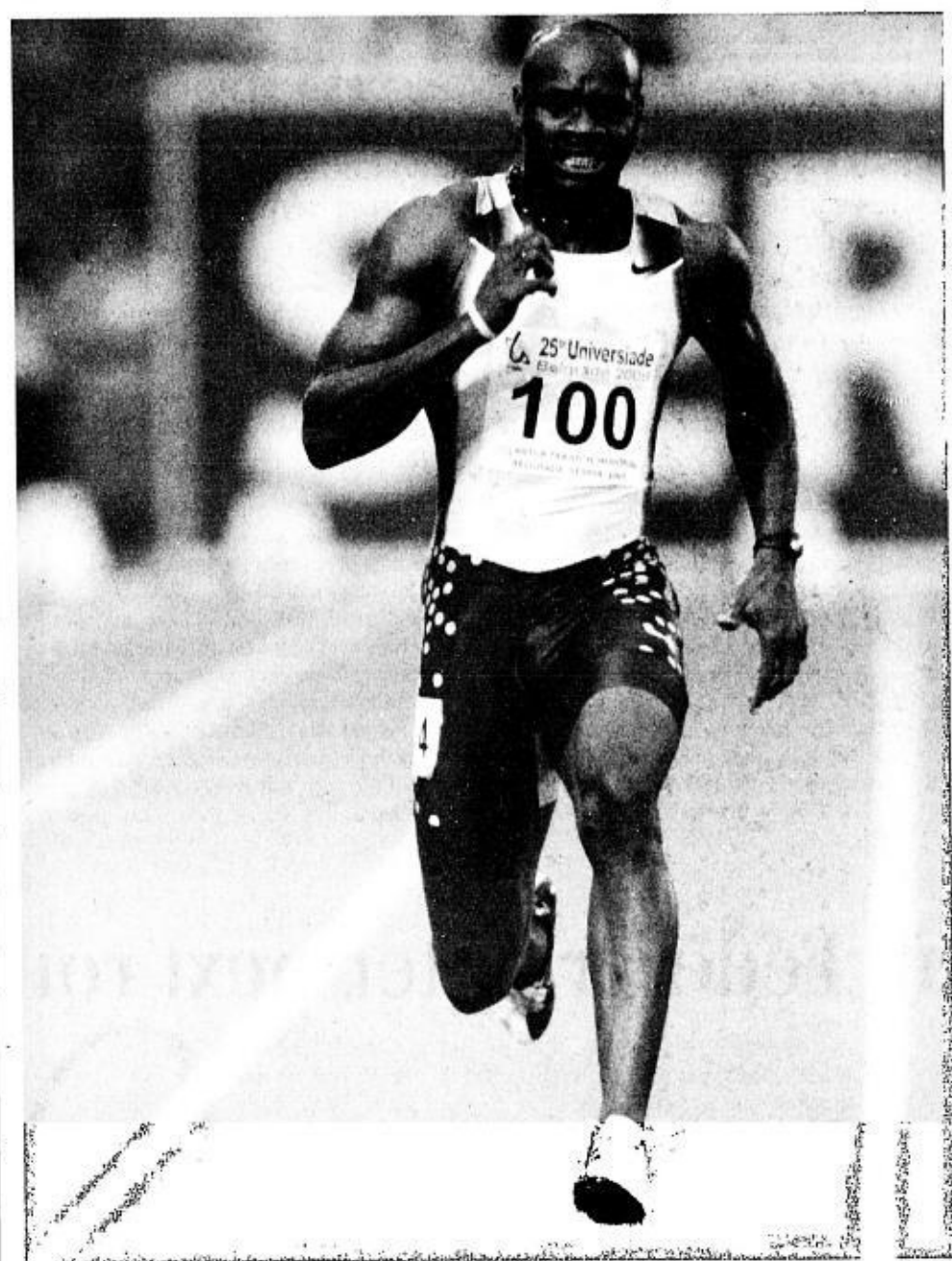
Carrying the colors of Royal Northwoods, Dungca and Donato combined for a best-ball net of 42 points under the Stableford system to emerge the top team among 10 finalists in the 18-hole tourney presented by Callaway.

The big-hitting Dungca was solid throughout but it was Donato who delivered the clinching saves coming home as they turned back the Ayala Greenfield pair of Augie Palisoc and Boy de Fiesta by two points. There was a three-way tie for third place at 37 points among Bobby Celestino and Joe La'O of Riviera, the husband-and-wife tandem of Arnold and Lita Jumalon and Eagle Ridge's Jan Tambogon and Karlyn Khey Torres.

Callaway served as the presenter of the International Pairs series while Yamaha/Kart Plaza Manufacturing and HSBC were finals sponsors.

Lufthansa will be flying Dungca and Donato and the whole Philippine entourage to Scotland where they will compete against representatives of at least 24 other countries on July 1-3.

The other finishers were Alabang's Alfred and Nelly Javellana (36), Valley's Chino Raymundo and Zaldy Villa (34), Lino Magpantay and Placido Chavez of Malarayat (32), Rolie and Arlette Dizon of Southwoods (32) and Francisco Delos Santos and Carlos Alejandro of Orchard (30). Also joining the RP team is Marlon Villanueva who won a round-trip ticket to Scotland via Lufthansa.



EASY WIN: Asafa Powell of Jamaica wins the men's 100 meters unchallenged during the Athletics Bet meet in Belgrade, Serbia, Tuesday. The world 100-meter record holder, returning from a bout with knee tendinitis, led from start to finish to clock 9.97 seconds at the Artur Takac Memorial track and field meet.

New events in Olympic gold drive

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THERE WILL BE MORE athletes and sports disciplines in the Olympic training program but there will also be a different fund-raising tack and possibly lesser funds.

Mike Arroyo, husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, met with Philippine Sports Commission chair Butch Ramirez and Philippine Olympic Committee first vice president Monico Puentevella yesterday and reaffirmed his commitment to help finance the Olympic program.

Ramirez said Arroyo, newly recovered from a recent delicate heart surgery, also agreed to include three more sports for a total of seven in the program, raising the number of Olympic hopefuls to 31 athletes and 12 coaches.

But the PSC chief said there will be a change in the manner of raising the Olympic budget which may not necessarily be P250 million as earlier projected.

"He (Arroyo) was thinking of getting each sport a godfather," said Ramirez of the change from the usual pledging session with top companies and businessmen which took care of funding previous RP delegation campaigns in the past.

Ramirez said the PSC will continue to bankroll the Olympic training program and will later seek reimbursement from the eventual godfather/corporation that will be tapped.

Arroyo raised P160 million for the training of the Filipino bets in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, which the country won for the first time since joining the event in 1977.

Wushu, lawn tennis and diving were added to the earlier roster of boxing, taekwondo, fencing and shooting.

Boxing will have seven athletes and three coaches including a Cuban mentor. Taekwondo will have six athletes and two coaches, while shooting and fencing will have two athletes and one coach each.

Wushu, a special sport in the Beijing Games, and diving will have six athletes and two coaches each. Lawn tennis, which is counted upon to score especially in the men's doubles, gets two athletes and one coach.

Ramirez said the PSC is allocating P50 million for the training of 22 athletes and 12 coaches from gymnastics, swimming, track and field, archery, rowing and weightlifting.

Tabuena leads 100 Presidents winners

By Musong R. Castillo

THE SCORING DURING THE HUNDRED Presidents Invitational Golf Tournament hosted by the Inquirer recently told it all—the event was far from friendly.

The field turned Wack Wack's West course upside down, with scores in the mid-60s submitted by the junior golfers and the team tournament producing co-champions that fired eye-popping 19-under 53s.

Miguel Tabuena ran away with the Jungolf Division crown after firing a seven-under 65 to win

over John Kier Abdon by two with Milko Yee finishing third, another stroke back.

The team of Mel Dizon, J.L. Dee, Jay Tengco, Andres Unson and Inquirer News Editor Jun Engracia shared the title with the squad of Rainier Quilala, Butch Bonsol, Toti Ramos and Albert Delos Santos after firing those 63s.

Kenneth Yang won the Class A title in the Presidents' division after shooting a gross 79 for a 68, while Jesus Reyes was the Class B champ after firing an eagle-aided 92 for a 71 to nip Mar Marron via a countback.

Charlie Agatep, a 25-handicapper, submitted a

net 73 to edge Tony Abaya by a stroke and pocket the Class C diadem, even as Finina Gorres shot a 79 for a 70 for the Ladies title.

Teams were made up of one Inquirer employee, a corporate president, a lady golfer and a jungolfer with the team using the best net score from each hole as its score.

Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto and president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez also played, though both fell short in helping their respective sides contend for titles.

The awarding ceremonies were a huge success with handsome prizes given away in the raffle.

Southwoods golf lures 250 teams

THE MANILA SOUTHWOODS' Invitational golf tournament teed off yesterday with more than 250 teams, composed of members and guests, teeing off at the Jack Nicklaus-designed Legends and newly renovated Masters layout in Carmona, Cavite.

The upper half of the field started play as they eye the top honors and the more than P5 million worth of raffle prizes and giveaways in the

36-hole competition that will use the modified Stableford scoring format. The other half begins its round today.

At stake as hole-in-one prizes are a Mitsubishi Lancer GLX Manual courtesy of Mitsubishi Motors and Diamond Motors and an eight-day, seven-night Royal Caribbean Mexican Riviera Cruise for two plus Korean Air business class tickets to Manila-Los Angeles-Manila.



INQUIRER NO. 1

Members of the Philippine Daily Inquirer bowling team flash a No. 1 sign after turning over on Wednesday the championship trophy it won at the recent First Intermedia Tenpin Bowling Tournament to INQUIRER president and CEO Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez. INQUIRER topped the elimination rounds, then beat dzRH in the semifinals and the Journal Group in the finals. INQUIRER also received trophies for posting the highest single team score and the highest triple team score. Babes Good also won two individual awards—high single and high triple in the women's division. From left: Rolly Suarez, PDI Human Resource Development head, Genie Lagman, Babes Good, Inocencio Francisco, Ms Romualdez, Elizabeth Andres, Abelardo Ulanday, Aries Espinosa, Gary Libby, Gilbert Rago, and Christine Ang. Other team members are Adela Mendoza and Carlito Abing. The tournament, held at Paeng's Bowling Center at Robinson's in Ermita, Manila, was conducted by the Media Sports Club headed by Edith Angeles and was sponsored by Coca-Cola Bottlers Inc. Phils.

PHOTO BY RUDY ESPERAS

SPORTSWATCH

Enriquez bags second sweep

JOHN LERY ENRIQUEZ OF SUZUKI ONCE MORE stamped his class, leaving his rivals far behind in clinching his second straight sweep recently in the 2007 San Mig Coffee Philippine Underbone King Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit. Pulling away from the pack right from the start, he crossed the finish line almost 20 seconds ahead of his rivals for the overall victory in the premiere 150cc Open class. Posting a fastest laptime of 2:00.45, Enriquez wrapped up the eight-lap Race 3 in 16 minutes, 17.267 or 22.526 seconds ahead of runner-up and defending Underbone king Jaime Barcial. Not even veteran Benjo Mendoza could narrow the gap in Race 4 as Enriquez took the checkered flag in 16:19.985 or 19.934 seconds ahead of the runner-up. Mendoza ended in a three-way tie with Barcial and Rizaldy Canare with 40 points apiece but Mendoza bagged runner-up honors and Canare landed third by virtue of their better finishes in Race 4. Fil-Japanese Dashi Watanabe, Watanabe, only 13, also posted a sweep in the 110cc Petron Super Stock Class at the expense of Anthony Roman and Dexter Daquigan.



BY TOP CHOICE

- Race 1—He's The Man/Indelible Ink (5), Black Mamba (1), Red Scooter (4), Getting Better (3)
 Race 2—Deep Rising (5), Delicious Decision (4), Beyond Glory (1)
 Race 3—(Qr/Tri)—Bunker Buster (4), Nitty Gritty (1), Fahrenheit (3), Easy Rider (6)
 Race 4—(Tri)—Arctic Desert (1), Complexion (3), On The Fairway (2)
 Race 5—(Qr/Tri)—Gypsy Grey (4), Maglev (2), Regal Chief (3), Sixela (7)
 Race 6—(Tri)—Mercurio (2), Mindpower Miss (5), Affirmed Queen (1)
 Race 7—(Pent/Tri)—Gold Money (5), Friendly Fire (7), Allysa's Choice (1), Hakuna Matata (4), Inga Inga (2)
 Race 8—(Super 6/Qr/Tri)—Fair Urduja (2), Seeling Red (12), Cool Turner (7), Powerdance (10), Fine Offer (8), Wild Orphan (2)

De Luna, Gomez join Guinness 9-ball tour

RISING POOL STARS JEFFREY DE Luna and Roberto Gomez have been invited to compete in the 3rd leg of the Guinness 9-ball tour on June 15-17 at the Genting Highlands Resort, Malaysia.

De Luna and Gomez will play against some of Asia's best cue artists in the event which offers a champion purse of \$15,000. The first two legs were dominated by the Taiwanese, namely Chang Jung-lin (Jakarta) and Yang Ching-shun (Raohsiung), in order.

De Luna and Gomez were invited to represent the Philippines along with their fellow Bugsy promotion mainstay and double world champion Ronato Alcano and Negros Billiards Stable top player Lee Vann Cortez in Asia's only ranking tour for this year's World Pool Championships.

The 23-year-old De Luna, Alcano and Cortez are already seeded in the main draw of the Philippine WPC in November for making the "last 16" in last year's WPC Manila edition.

However, De Luna, the 2006 Asian Games 9-ball pool silver medalist, is aiming to advance to the Grand Finals of the Guinness 9-ball tour on Aug. 31 to Sept. 2 in Bali, Indonesia, which offers \$36,000 for the overall grand champion.

The 27-year-old Gomez, a native of Divisoria, Zamboanga, is looking to duplicate his victory in The 9-Ball Battle of Scandinavian billiards tournament in January at the Elbowroom in Oslo, Norway. **Marlon Bernardino, Contributor**

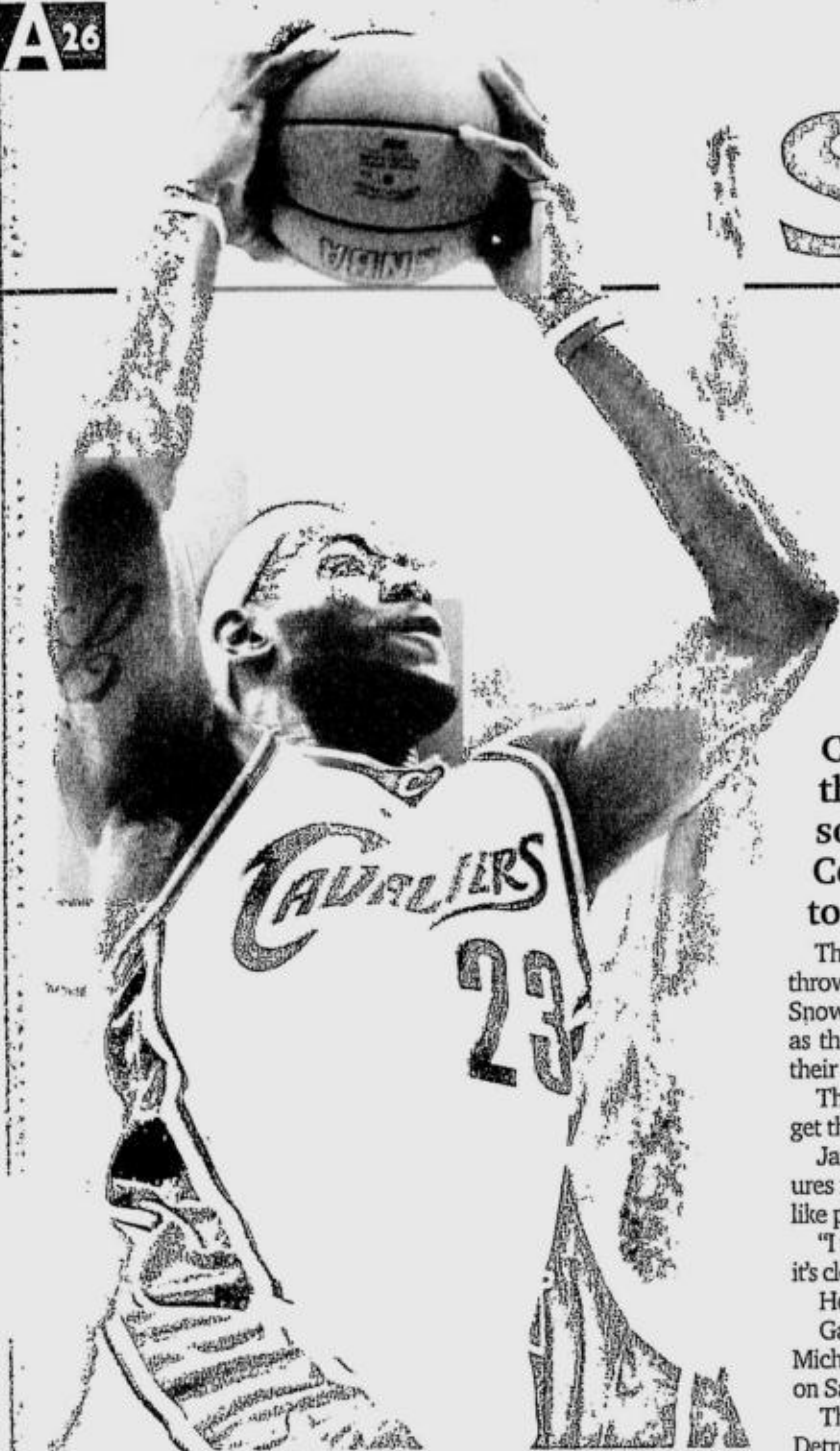


GOMEZ



DE LUNA

SPORTS

James, rookie help
Cavaliers forge tie

CLEVELAND superstar LeBron James takes charge for the Cavaliers, putting his team back on even terms with the Detroit Pistons. AFP

CLEVELAND—LEBRON JAMES SCORED 25 POINTS—13 IN the fourth quarter—and rookie Daniel Gibson added a season-high 21 as the Cleveland Cavaliers evened the Eastern Conference finals with a 91-87 victory over the Detroit Pistons in Game 4 Tuesday.

The 21-year-old Gibson made 12 of 12 free throws, Drew Gooden added 19 points and Eric Snow hit a crucial free throw in the final seconds as the Cavaliers moved within two victories of their first trip to the finals.

They'll have to win at least once in Detroit to get there.

James, criticized for his fourth-quarter failures in Games 1 and 2 at Detroit, had a virtuoso-like performance in the final 12 minutes.

"I told my teammates, 'Get me to the fourth and it's close, and I'll try my best to win,'" James said.

He made good on his word.

Game 5 is Thursday night in Auburn Hills, Michigan, with Game 6 back at Quicken Loans on Saturday.

The Cavaliers, who lost a seven-game series to Detroit last year, are making just their third visit to the conference finals and each time they've been tied 2-2 before losing in six games.

When he was drafted, James promised to bring the championship-starved city its first title since 1964, and he's closing in on one quicker than anyone expected.

"The series is a lot better being 2-2 than 3-1 and going back to Detroit," James said. "I had to be aggressive in the fourth quarter and step up."

Chauncey Billups scored 23 points, Rip Hamilton 19 and Tayshaun Prince 15 for the Pistons, who needed last-second wins to go up 2-0 in the best-of-seven series and are suddenly the team looking for answers.

Their frustration boiled over in the fourth when Rasheed Wallace was whistled for a technical during Cleveland's 9-0 run.

In the final minutes, it was the more-experienced Pistons who couldn't come up with the big play. With Detroit down 88-85, Wallace blocked a shot in the lane, but Billups rushed a 3-pointer that missed. On Cleveland's next possession,

Snow, who only played 1:05, got fouled following a scramble for a loose ball.

Snow's free throw put the Cavaliers ahead by four before Antonio McDyess' tip-in got the Pistons within 89-87 with 4.7 seconds left.

James was fouled, and Cleveland's superstar—whose poor free-throw shooting has been one of his only flaws—calmly knocked down both foul shots to make it 91-87 with four seconds remaining.

As James was preparing to shoot, Hamilton walked up and tried to rattle him with a few words—just as James had done to Washington's Gilbert Arenas in the playoffs last season.

"I invented that," James joked. "No, Scottie Pippen invented that with Karl Malone. He (Hamilton) tried to mess with me and I had to stay focused."

Wallace missed a three-pointer, James hauled in his seventh rebound to go with 11 assists and Cleveland had one of the biggest wins in its 37-year history.

After a three-point play by James, Wallace's jumper put the Pistons up 77-74 with 7:29 left, but the Cavs responded with six straight points, capped by Sasha Pavlovic's run-out layup that forced the Pistons to call time. AP

FRENCH OPEN

Roddick ousted; Nadal, Federer enter next round

PARIS—ANDY RODDICK IS OUT OF the French Open in the first round again.

For the second straight year and fourth time in the last six years, the American exited at the earliest stage, falling to Igor Andreev of Russia, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4, Tuesday.

"It was difficult, but I made him go out and beat me today," said the third-seeded Roddick, who was broken at love in the third game of the final set when he double-faulted for the first time. "I felt like I hit the ball OK today. At times, really well."

Two-time defending champion Rafael

Nadal and top-ranked Roger Federer won in straight sets, with Nadal improving to 15-0 for his career at the French Open.

No. 5 Fernando Gonzalez and No. 8 James Blake lost. Gonzalez, the Australian Open finalist, lost to Radek Stepanek, 6-2, 6-4, 6-4, while Ivo Karlovic beat Blake, 4-6, 6-4, 7-5, 7-5.

Roddick hasn't won consecutive matches at Roland Garros since 2001. Last year, he quit with an ankle injury after losing his first two sets against Alberto Martin of Spain.

Roddick has reached two finals at the US Open, winning the 2003 title, and also

two finals at Wimbledon. But at the French Open, the furthest he's reached is the third round in 2001.

"I'm not going to give up. It's my biggest challenge, that's not a secret," Roddick said.

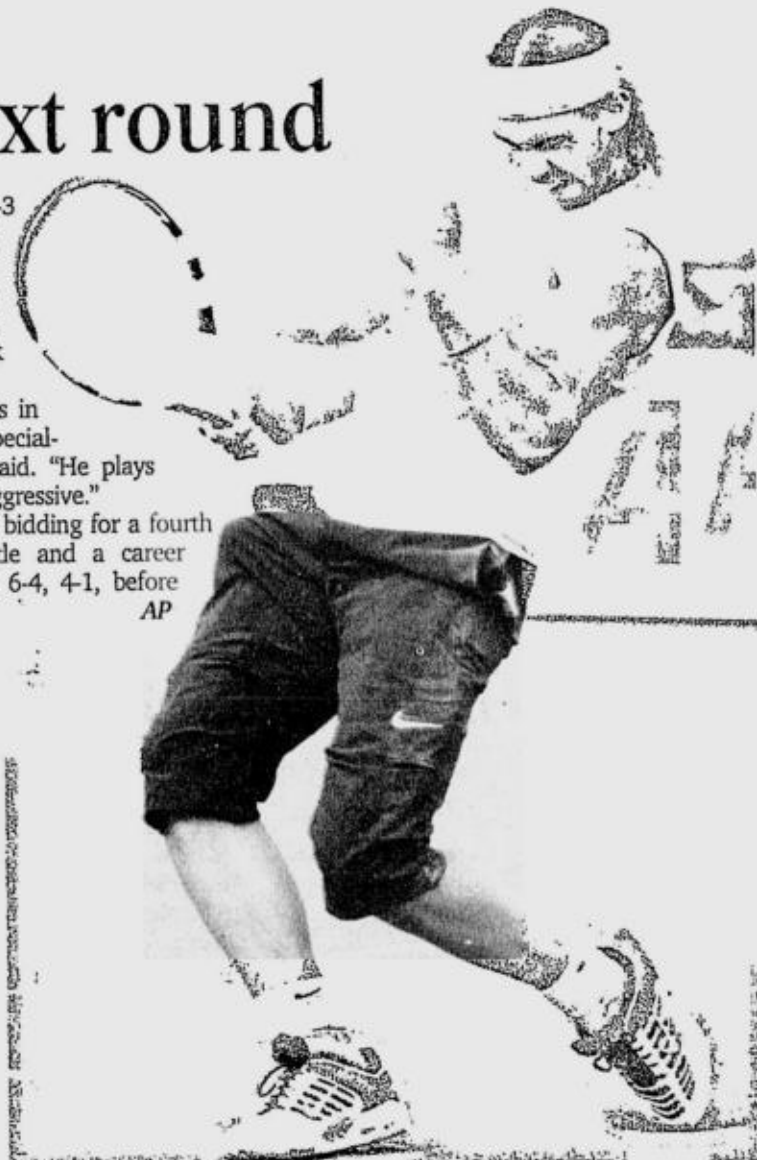
Andreev had been the last man to beat Nadal on clay before Federer defeated the second-ranked Spaniard at the Hamburg Masters and ended his 81-match winning streak on the surface.

Nadal beat Juan Martin del Potro, 7-5, 6-3, 6-2, while Federer beat Michael Russell of the United States, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4, in a first-round match that started Monday.

Nadal trailed 5-3 in the first set, but then won eight straight games to take control and start a new streak on clay.

"Difficult always in the first round, especially here," Nadal said. "He plays very tough, very aggressive."

Federer, who is bidding for a fourth straight major title and a career Grand Slam, led, 6-4, 4-1, before rain halted play. AP



RAFAEL Nadal of Spain reacts after beating Argentina's Juan Martin del Potro, in a first round match of the French Open tennis tournament, at the Roland Garros stadium. Nadal won 7-5, 6-3, 6-2 and continued his unbeaten run in a tournament where he is the reigning back-to-back champion. AP

Tiger's juggling act: childbirth, US Open, his own tournament

BETHESDA, MARYLAND—AS HIS WIFE PREPARES to give birth to the couple's first child, Tiger Woods is giving birth to his first US PGA Tour golf tournament.

And, oh yeah, there's something called the US Open coming up, too.

The top player in the world is a very busy man these days.

"My time management skills are going to be tested," Woods said. "But, then again, these are all things that are very exciting: hosting my first tour event, playing in the US Open, and above all, the birth of a first child. Thankfully, I don't sleep much."

His voice turned down a notch by a case of strep throat, Woods dropped by Congressional Country Club on Tuesday to promote the AT&T National, which will be run by his foundation and will debut July 5-8. Those dates are important, because that's around the time his wife, Elin, is due.

"My intent is to play," Woods said. "But my wife has something to say about that. Especially for the inaugural event, I want to be here. But as everyone understands, our No. 1 priority in our lives is our child. You only get to witness it for the first time only once."

Woods said it's been difficult delegating his time because he wants to be hands-on with an event associated with his name. It's a rush job because the tournament wasn't announced until March, after the International in Denver vacated the July date.

"It's hard work," Woods said. "It really is. You don't do this with golf tournaments, especially on this scale. It just doesn't happen."

"We wanted to make this a family atmosphere," Woods said. "A lot of times I play tournaments around the world where the prices of tickets are basically out of control."

Woods also has been his recruiting fellow golfers to play in the tournament. AP

WIE RETURNS

Michelle Wie practices for the LPGA Ginn Tribute golf tournament at Rivertowne Country Club in Mount Pleasant. It will be her first tournament since she missed the cut at the PGA's Sony Open in January. AP



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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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Asia markets fall as China stocks tumble

RP shares close 1.57% lower, tracking regional downturn

The PESO SHED HALF A PERCENT as Asian currencies weakened against the dollar on Wednesday, reacting to a decline in stock markets across the region after China raised a stocks trading tax to check speculation in its market.

At the Philippine Stock Exchange, share prices yesterday closed 1.57 percent lower.

The dealers said the fall on regional markets were sparked by the sharp decline of Chinese stocks after Beijing tripled the stamp duty on securities transactions in a bid to cool its red-hot market.

According to the PSE, the composite index fell 54.07 points to 3,398.55 after trading between 3,394.61 to 3,458.60. The broader all-share index fell 33.71 points to 2,179.59.

There were 96 decliners and 23 advancers, while 53 stocks were unchanged.

Volume totaled 5.3 billion shares worth P5.1 billion (\$110.6 million).

The peso weakened to 46.43 to a dollar from Tuesday's close of 46.13.

"Technically, the market is still overbought," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp.

He said investors also took the safe side after China's latest move to curb the rapid rise in its stock market.

Some analysts expect buyers to resurface if the composite index manages to stay around the 3,400 point level.

Ayala Land Inc., the most actively traded stock, fell 25 centavos to P15. Trading in shares of the property developer was briefly suspended yesterday following a newspaper report that it was looking at robust growth in sales at one of its residential projects.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. retreated P70 to P2,470.

Conglomerate Ayala Corp. bucked the trend, gaining five pesos to P520. Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s A and B shares were steady at P65.50 and P76.00, respectively.

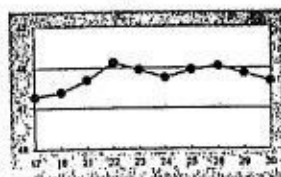
In China, the Shanghai Composite Index lost more than 6 percent after the Chinese

government on Tuesday raised stamp tax to 0.3 percent from 0.1 percent. The index had climbed 62 percent so far this year.

Stock markets in Singapore, Japan and Taiwan were all down. The MSCI index of re-

ASIA/B4

CURRENCIES



MAY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.33 = \$1

As of 5 p.m., May 30, 2007

INDICATORS

STOCK MARKET

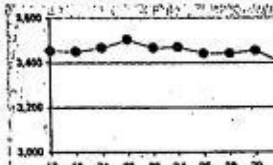
¥ 121.64 = \$1

As of 5 p.m., May 30, 2007

GOLD: \$658.10-\$658.60

per ounce Hong Kong, May 30, 2007

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Iloilo airport bidders get 2nd chance

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN PREVIOUS bidders for the old Iloilo Airport property the chance to acquire the state-owned asset by matching the floor price of P1.2 billion.

Margarito Teves, secretary of the Department of Finance, said DOF representatives separately met with officials of the companies that participated in the failed bidding on May 9 to offer them the 54-ha property.

He said that his office has yet to receive a reply from any of the three previous bidders.

The bidding for the airport failed because all the bid prices submitted by the participants—Robinsons Land Corp., Empire East Properties Inc. and SM Prime Holdings—fell below the floor price set by the DOF.

The floor price was revealed to bidding participants only after they have submitted their bids on the afternoon of May 9.

Finance officials involved in the privatization effort said keeping the floor price secret until the bid date was a strategy intended to encourage participants to submit the best bid price they could.

Unfortunately, no bid reached P1.2 billion.

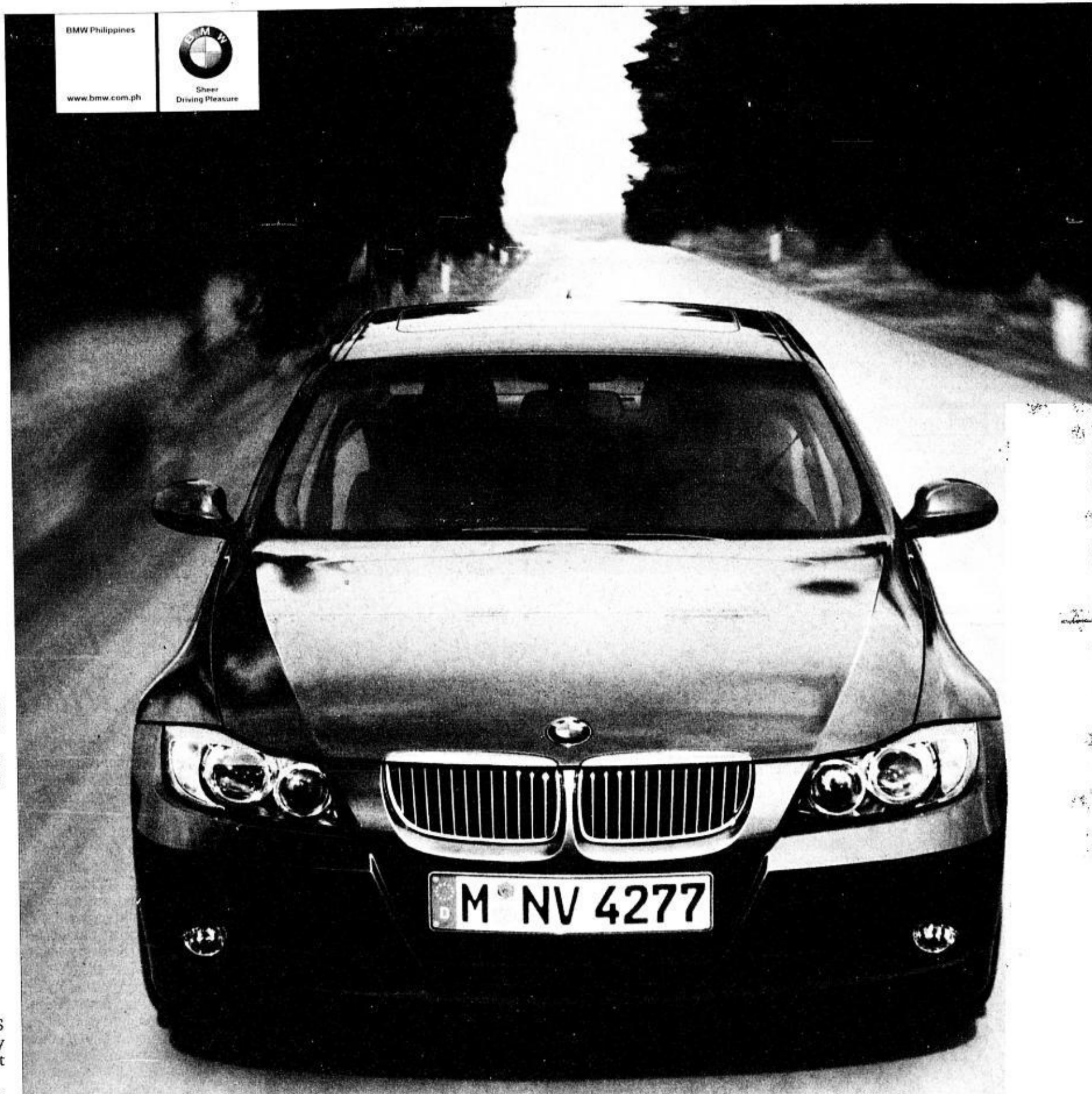
Robinsons submitted the highest bid price of P1.089 billion. Empire East submitted its price of P701 million, while SM Prime offered only P435.79 million.

A DOF official heading the privatization team said that the government is now free to enter into a negotiated sale with any interested parties following the failed bidding.

The DOF is still hoping to sell the airport within the year. Prior to the bidding, the DOF said it was hoping to secure a price of as much as P2 billion for the property, the official said.

Teves said generating revenue from privatization was one way to cope with shortfalls in tax collection. He said the DOF was keeping its hopes up that it would meet this year's deficit reduction goal despite

ILOILO/B3



3

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DOF wants limit to Tax Amnesty Law coverage

Gov't hopes to raise revenue by charging fees on taxpayers

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE SAID IT would push for the exclusion of tax evaders already charged in courts from the coverage of the tax amnesty offered by the government.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the Tax Amnesty Law, which took effect last Monday, should not cover tax cheats who had already been charged by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

Teves said the DOF, mother agency of the BIR, believed that the law's intention should be to encourage hard-to-catch tax evaders to come out in the open and pay the amnesty fee. Those that were already "caught and charged" should not be covered.

The intention was clearly stated in the original version of the tax amnesty bill, but the final version was vague on whether those with pending court cases were also covered.

Teves said this would be addressed by clearly stating this intention in the law's implementing rules and regulations (IRR), which were being drafted by the BIR.

However, he said the principal authors of the Tax Amnesty Law should first agree that the law intended to exclude those with pending court cases.

If the authors of the law do not agree, Teves said the BIR could not possibly come up with an IRR that would contradict the real intentions of the law.

He said finance officials would meet with Quezon Rep. Danilo Suarez, one of the authors of the bill, to ask whether excluding those with pending court cases from the amnesty would not contradict the law's intention.

The tax amnesty measure automatically became a law last Monday, or 30 days after it was submitted to Malacañang for approval.

The President neither signed the bill nor vetoed it, as some had expected.

Upon submission of any bill to Malacañang for signing, the President has 30 days to sign or veto it. The bill automatically becomes a law if the President fails to veto it within the prescribed period.

The tax amnesty bill was one of the reform



TEVES

agenda pushed by the Arroyo administration in 2004 to put the government's fiscal affairs in order.

The Tax Amnesty Law gives a qualified taxpayer immunity from lawsuit involving tax deficiencies up to 2005 upon payment of the tax amnesty fee.

The amnesty applicant should also submit a statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) as of Dec. 31, 2005, which will be the basis of the computation of the amnesty fee.

The following is the schedule of the tax amnesty rate:

- Individuals, cooperatives, foundations, and other juridical entities, 5 percent of net worth or P50,000, whichever is higher;
- Corporations with subscribed capital of more than P50 million, 5 percent of net worth or 500,000, whichever is higher;
- Those with subscribed capital of P20 million to P50 million, 5 percent of net worth or P250,000, whichever is higher;
- Corporations with subscribed capital of between P5 million and P20 million, 5 percent of net worth or P100,000, whichever is higher; and
- Those with subscribed capital of below P5 million, 5 percent of net worth or P25,000, whichever is higher.

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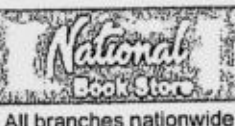
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FirstPac buying Indonesian firm

FIRST PACIFIC CO. LTD. HAS announced that its Singapore-listed subsidiary, Indo Agri and 90-owned unit SIMP, had entered into a deal involving the 'conditional sale and purchase' of PT Perusahaan Perkebunan London Sumatra Indonesia Tbk (PPLS), a listed Indonesian firm engaged in breeding, planting, milling and selling of palm oil products.

The proposed acquisition will involve about US\$649.2 million, First Pacific said in a statement.

Inclusive of the maximum amount payable under the proposed tender offer for the remaining PPLS shares, First Pacific said the amount in consideration would reach about \$1.03 billion.

First Pacific is a major stockholder in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., having an economic interest of about 25

percent. First Pacific is listed on the Hongkong Stock Exchange.

The acquisition of PPLS was done through the purchase of the Singapore firm's major stockholders, First Durango and the Ashmore Funds which have an aggregate holdings of about 65.4 percent in PPLS.

At the request of First Pacific, trading of its shares in the Hongkong Stock Exchange was suspended on May 25, 2007 pending publication of the announcement. First Pacific had requested the resumption of trading of its shares on May 29, 2007.

The PPLS Group has a total land bank of about 163,400 hectares. The group also manages 36,000 hectares of plasma plantations. It is one of the largest producers of crude palm oil in Indonesia with about 340,000 metric tons of crude palm oil production last year.

\$30M worth of agri exports to NZ seen

By Amy R. Remo

NEW ZEALAND BUSINESSMEN have committed to import more than \$30 million worth of fresh and processed agro-fishery products from the Philippines, said Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap.

In a statement, Yap said these included fresh mangoes, banana chips and desiccated coconut, sardines, dried anchovies, squid, ready-mix sauces, chili nuts and fruit juices.

The commitments were made during President Macapagal-Arroyo's state visit to New Zealand, which was capped by a visit to the Sanitarium Health Food Co. facility in Auckland yesterday.

Yap said the DA had also entered into a partnership arrangement with New Zealand's leading health food company to explore the possibility of Sanitarium buying Filipino food items and supporting the country's milk feeding program.

Known as a maker of quality health and plant-based foods, Sanitarium is a leading provider

of health and nutrition information in the food industry.

It produces cereals, bread spreads, soy milk products, and a variety of chilled and canned vegetable products. It also has health food shops and vegetarian cafes.

Among Sanitarium's most popular food brands is Weet-Bix, which has been the No. 1 selling breakfast cereal in New Zealand for almost 40 years now.

Yap said the memorandum of agreement with Sanitarium was worked out by the department through Undersecretary Bernadette Romulo-Puyat and Ambassador to New Zealand Bien Tejano.

The agreement was signed by Yap, on behalf of the Philippine government, and Sanitarium global chief executive officer Kevin Jackson, during President Arroyo's visit to the facility.

"We can now pursue the sale to New Zealand of fresh and processed fruit and fruit products like mangoes, bananas and banana chips, nuts and desiccated coconut, through Sanitarium," Yap said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 30, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
17.5	17.5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	31.75	31.75	31.75	31.75	20,000
20	20	Bank of the Philippine Islands	68.5	68.5	68.5	68.5	1,296,700
21	21	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	68.5	68.5	68.5	68.5	2,980
23.5	23.5	China Banking Corp.	900	900	900	900	400
24	24	Citibank Philippines Inc.	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	58,120
26	26	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	117	117	117	117	1,840,000
28	28	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	560,700
29	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	56	56	56	56	1,114,600
30	30	Philippine National Bank	53.5	53.5	53.5	53.5	2,293,000
31	31	Philippine Bank of Communications	32	32	32	32	54,000
32	32	Rural Commercial Bank Corp.	83.5	83.5	83.5	83.5	2,212,700
33.57	33.57	Security Bank Corp.	65	65	65	65	812,000
34	34	Union Bank of the Philippines	1.65	1.65	1.65	1.65	12,504,000
35	35	Other Financial Institutions					
36	36	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,660.00	1,660.00	1,660.00	1,660.00	130
37	37	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	130
38	38	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.35	2.35	2.35	2.35	130
39	39	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	585	585	585	585	1,372,000
40	40	San Life Financial Inc.	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	
41	41	Vantage Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	
42	42	Electricity, Energy, Power & Water					
43	43	First Gen Corp.	60	60	60	60	230,100
44	44	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	79	79	79	79	435,000
45	45	Manila Water Co. Inc.	117.5	117.5	117.5	117.5	5,644,400
46	46	Manila Electric Co. "A"	90.5	90.5	90.5	90.5	1,161,800
47	47	Manila Electric Co. "B"	92.5	92.5	92.5	92.5	15,279,000
48	48	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	3,855,000
49	49	Petron Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	2,695,000
50	50	Trans Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	89,000
51	51	Food, Beverage & Tobacco					
52	52	Alaska Milk Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	2,355,000
53	53	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	68,000
54	54	Genesys San Miguel Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	33,000
55	55	Jollibee Foods Corp.	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	171,000
56	56	Roma Holdings	66	66	66	66	130,700
57	57	San Miguel Corp. "A"	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	10,000
58	58	San Miguel Corp. "B"	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	9,574,500
59	59	Swift Foods Inc.	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	624,000
60	60	Universal Reins. Corp.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	10,000
61	61	Construction Infrastructure & Industrial Services					
62	62	EEI Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	3,157,000
63	63	Fortune Cement Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	3,000
64	64	Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	5,456,000
65	65	Republic Cement Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	1,923,000
66	66	Southern Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0	0	0	0	10,000
67	67	Chemicals					
68	68	Chemtech Technologies Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	1,000
69	69	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
70	70	Perpet Resources Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
71	71	Holding Firms					
72	72	A. Serrano Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	1,111,000
73	73	AJO Net Holdings Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	324,900,000
74	74	APC Group Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	114,848,000
75	75	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	8,000
76	76	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	191,300,000
77	77	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	38,400,000
78	78	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	5,176,000
79	79	Abolito Equity Ventures Inc.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	279,200,000
80	80	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	7,601,000
81	81	Alliance Global Group Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	5,853,000
82	82	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	21,000
83	83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	143,900
84	84	Anglo-Philippine Resources Inc.	8	8	8	8	65,900
85	85	Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. "A"	515	515	515	515	300,000
86	86	Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc. "B"	14	14	14	14	30,684,000
87	87	Avila Corp.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	7,124,000
88	88	Bacolod Consolidated Industries Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	55,000
89	89	Bacolod Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	70,000
90	90	Benguet Holdings Corp.	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	200,000
91	91	DMCI Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,380,000
92	92	Fininvest Development Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	5,998,000
93	93	House of Investments Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	9,743,000
94	94	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	399,000
95	95	Medco Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	49,000
96	96	Muhay Holdings Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	36,450,000
97	97	Muktech Investments Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	345,910
98	98	Pal Holdings Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	88,000
99	99	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	82,920,000
100	100	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	412.5	412.5	412.5	412.5	171,000
101	101	SM Investments Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	265,000
102	102	Seafont Resources Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	19,210,000
103	103	Sinophill Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	
104	104	Solid Group Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	
105	105	South China Resources Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	
106	106	Warner Industries Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	
107	107	Property					
108	108	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	7,944,000
109	109	Avaneta Properties Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	600,000
110	110	Avila Land Inc.	15.25	15.25	15.25	15.25	48,127,300
111	111	Belle Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	28,591,000
112	112	C and P Homes Inc.	4	4	4	4	1,654,000
113	113	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "A"	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	394,000
114	114	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "B"	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	2,000
115	115	City and Land Developers Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	10,000
116	116	Crown Holdings Inc.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	5,090,000
117	117	Crown Bay Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	35,790,000
118	118	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	39,000
119	119	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,840,000
120	120	Ever Goss Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	56,230,000
121	121	Fi-Estate Land Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	17,490,000
122	122	Fininvest Land Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	13,120,000
123	123	Interport Resources Corp. "A"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	8,100,000
124	124	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	15,000,000
125	125	Kuok Phai Properties Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	2,990,000
126	126	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	2,680,000
127	127	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	31,302,000
128	128	Phil. Estates Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	4,000
129	129	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	12,610,000
130	130	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	27,390,000
131	131	Robinson Land Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	310,000
132	132	SM Development Corp.	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	2,865,000
133	133	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	13	13	13	13	612,000
134	134	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	13	13	13	13	6,460,100

0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.7	0.73	0.7	0.7	550,000
0.33	0.06	Univide Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.28	0.28	79,090,000
1.74	0.3	Zipporah Realty Holdings Inc.	1.34	1.36	1.24	1.26	1,998,000
MEDIA							
32	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	43,300
14	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1.02	1.02	1	1.07	88,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS							
2.12	1.12	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.64	1.56	1.56	1.56	5,813,000
1,445.00	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,340.00	1,340.00	1,330.00	1,335.00	120,890
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,540.00	2,540.00	2,470.00	2,470.00	159,880
7.9	3.1	Panama Telephone Corp.	6.8	7	6.7	6.8	6,975,000
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY							
6.39	0.105	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.28	59,030,000
9.1	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.5	52,000
0.0875	0.046	IPVG Corp.	0.075	0.077	0.07	0.07	1,088,000
0.033	0.011	ISM Communications Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	38,400,000
2.9	1.78	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	2.18	2.18	2.16	2.16	10,000,000
0.0575	0.038	Ionics Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.0525	0.0525	17,000,000
1.84	1.12	Island Information and Technology Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	212,000
0.06	0.027	Music Semiconductors Corp.	0.049	0.0525	0.048	0.049	606,200,000
5.8	1	Philweb Corp.	2.14	2.18	2.06	2.06	90,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES							
1.88	1.14	About Transport System Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	345,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	81,000
32	12.5	Inf'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28	28	27.5	27.5	925,000
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.9	1.92	1.88	1.9	963,000
HOTEL & LEISURE							
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.7	2,890,000
4.55	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.6	86,000
0.76	0.18	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.62	0.63	5,640,000
1.2	0.42	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.92	0.96	0.92	0.95	9,640,000
EDUCATION							
9.8	7.2	Central Escolar University	7.4	7.4	7.4	7.4	2,000
965.67	650	Far Eastern University Inc.	800	800	800	800	70
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	99,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES							
0.35	0.17	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	25	25	25	23	4,600
5.2	1.84	MacroAsia Corp.	5.1	5.1	4.75	4.85	3,276,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16.75	16.75	16	16.25	3,843,000
30	9.5	Pray Inc.	25.5	26	25.5	26	385,700
MINING							
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	312,220,000
7.8	2.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.4	4,056,000
7.7	2.85	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.5	1,594,000
21.25	5.6	Apex Cos. Mining and Dev'l Corp.	18.75	18.75	17.75	18.25	3,892,200
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	569,300
2.5	0.9602	Geopac Resources Philippines Inc.	2.4	2.46	2.34	2.36	93,181,000
0.017	0.017	Lapointe Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	13,320,000
0.42	0.225	Lapointe Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	4,320,000
0.038	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.032	0.035	0.032	0.035	282,000,000
0.011	0.011	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.039	0.039	0.037	0.037	350,200,000
0.024	0.0075	Omicor Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	452,320,000
30	2.65	Philizer Mining Corp.	6.2	6.3	5.8	5.8	19,420,000
6.3	2.85	Serravallo Mining Corp.	28	28	26.5	26.5	9,000,000
12	0.2	United Parnara Mining Corp.	1.12	1.12	1	1.04	11,589,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.57	1.57	1.44	1.44	20,001,000
UTILITIES							
0.59	0.23	Bask Consolidated Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	5,380,000
0.021	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.019	161,800,000
0.022	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	256,200,000
14.62	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	799,500,000
0.024	0.0089	The Philodini Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.022	7,990,000
SOURCE: THOMSON DATA							

BUSINESS

PCCI urges changes in economic laws

Group calls for constituent assembly

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE and Industry yesterday called on the next Congress to convene as a constituent assembly to push for amendments in the economic provisions of the Constitution.

Former Prime Minister Cesar EA Virata, a member of PCCI's council of advisers, said the removal of barriers to entry of foreign investments, for instance, was necessary to ensure the country's competitiveness in a globalized economy.

"Since foreigners cannot take the land away, I see no reason for them to be allowed full ownership, for instance," Virata said.

Washington SyCip, another member of the council, suggested that an economic body of technocrats be formed, which would administer the economic sector without going through the delays in Congress.

"This body maybe something similar to a central bank that could quickly respond to changes in the economic landscape," SyCip

said. "Its actions should be put under review by Congress within a year or two to see whether these (are appropriate)."

"Congress takes eight years or so to make changes, by which time the economic landscape has changed yet again," he added. "We need something that could act quickly."

During PCCI's general membership meeting held yesterday at the New World Hotel, the council also put forward the following legislative agenda that the group could pursue:

- For improved infrastructure, which is an urgent concern among international investors, PCCI would support a House bill that promotes efficient and effective delivery of converging communications services; the creation of a Department of Information and Communication Technology; and the passage of a Renewable Energy Law.
- For a healthy financial system, the group would support a Senate bill that provides for the rehabilitation or liquidation of financially distressed enterprises; rationalization of fiscal incentives; and passage of a pre-need law.



CEBU Pacific orders up to 14 brand new ATR 72-500 worth more than \$250 million. Sealing the deal are (from left) ATR CEO Filippo Bagnato, Cebu Pacific president and CEO Lance Gokongwei and JG Summit Holding Inc. president James Go.

Biofuel: Spark of light for Mindanao

OUR ESTIMATED CONSUMPTION of oil is estimated to grow from 128 million barrels in 2000 to 224 million barrels in 2009. The implementation of the biofuel law requiring ethanol and biodegradable diesel in fuel mix will eventually result in savings of almost \$800 million worth of oil imports.

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian



Brazil, the world's top exporter of and leader in renewable energy, uses sugar cane as raw material. It has produced 15.9 billion liters of bio-ethanol in 2005, of which 90 percent went to the domestic market.

The United States uses corn and produces 18.9 billion liters of bio-ethanol each year. But to reach its goal of a 20-percent reduction in oil consumption by 2017, it needs 132 billion liters of bio-ethanol. With a third of its own corn production being used to produce bio-ethanol, prices of corn have been continuously rising.

Corn, sugarcane production

Corn and sugarcane are abundant in many regions in Mindanao. Corn production rose 11.5 percent due mainly to the 3-percent expansion in harvest areas, the availability of quality seeds and better market prices. Also, some sugar planters shifted to corn farming due to the improving prices of the latter. The farmers' use of loans extended by local government units likewise helped boost production.

Substantial increases in corn output were noted in most regions particularly in Regions XIII, X and XII. However, a slowdown in production was reported in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao due to slight worm infestation in Basilan, flooding in Maguindanao, landslide in Lanao del Sur and dry spell in Tawi-Tawi.

Total corn production was placed at 3,153.64 MT in 2004; 3,143.61 MT in 2005; and 1,183.73 MT for the first six months (January-June) of 2006. Sugar production, on the other hand, was recorded at 4,863.97 MT in 2004; 3,764.10 MT in 2005; and 2,925.78 MT in the first six months of 2006.

The corn variety in Mindanao is often used as feed grains by the livestock sector. When I was

still sitting on the National Corn Board, I learned that corn farmers from the region was besieged with so many problems that called for policy reforms—such as those involving the building of infrastructure, improving market information services and the adoption of relevant standards for corn grading—that could enhance market competition and facilitate an efficient market exchange. Infrastructure improvements should include better inter island shipping vessels and upgrading of roads to reduce the high cost of transportation. Regular shipping schedules between major producing and consuming areas would help ensure that corn can be transported when needed. The availability of storage and marketing facilities in towns and villages and on-farm would make it possible for farmers to hold corn, instead of just dumping them in the market after harvest.

Future uses of corn

The use for corn as a raw material for ethanol can provide thousands of corn farmers an alternative market for their crops. This may lead to an accelerated growth in corn demand, better prices and increased direct investments that would mean more livelihood opportunities for the farmers. Perhaps, even policy reforms will be implemented at a faster pace.

I still remember the happy faces of the hundreds of corn farmers who attended the recently concluded 1st Mindanao Corn Congress held in South Cotabato, where a P22.8-million worth of corn post harvest, processing and trading center was launched. All of them pin their hopes on this new development.

(Joji Ilagan-Bian is an advocate for Mindanao development and chair of Joji Ilagan Foundation. E-mail comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com.)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL HISTORICAL INSTITUTE
NHI Bldg., T.M. Kalaw St.,
Ermita, Manila

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS (In compliance with RA 7041)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, SG-24, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-CADOFF-3-2004. Masteral Degree; 4 years in position/s involving management and supervision; 24 hours of training in management and supervision; Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER V (Human Resource Management Officer III), SG-18, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADOF5-6-2004. Bachelor's Degree; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER V (Cashier III), SG-18, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADOF5-5-2004. Bachelor's Degree; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility.

PLANNING OFFICER III, SG-18, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-PL03-1-1998. Bachelor's Degree relevant to the job; 2 years of relevant experience; 8 hours of relevant training; Career Service Professional/Second Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE VI, SG-6, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADA6-10-2004. Completion of 2 years studies in college; Experience none required; Training none required; Career Service Sub-Professional/First Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE VI, SG-6, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADA6-11-2004. Completion of 2 years studies in college; Experience none required; Training none required; Career Service Sub-Professional/First Level Eligibility.

SHRINE GUIDE, SG-6, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-SHRG-1-1998. Completion of 2 years studies in college; Experience none required; Training none required; Career Service Sub-Professional/First Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT III (SECRETARY II), SG-9, Item No. ADAS3-1-2004. Completion of 2 years studies in college; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; Career Service Sub-Professional/First Level Eligibility.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT I (SECRETARY I), SG-7, Item No. NHI-NCCAC-ADA4-2-2004. Completion of 2 years studies in college; Experience none required; Training none required; Career Service Sub-Professional/First Level Eligibility.

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BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS (In Compliance with RA 7041)

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

A. Chief Administrative Officer (Human Resource Management Officer V) - SG 24
Item No. OMBA-CADOF-25-2006
Education: Masteral Degree; Experience: 4 years in position/s involving management and supervision; Training: 24 hours of training in management and supervision; Eligibility: Career Service Professional / Second Level Eligibility

B. Administrative Officer II (Human Resource Management Officer II) - SG 11
Item No. OMBA-ADOF2-55-2006
Education: Bachelor's Degree; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: Career Service Professional / Second Level Eligibility

Applicants should submit within ten (10) calendar days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

- 1) A letter stating the position applied for;
- 2) Fully accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
- 3) 1" x 1" picture (colored);
- 4) Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
- 5) Transcript of Records;
- 6) Certificates of Seminars/Training Attended;
- 7) Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable);
- 8) Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
- 9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

* Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

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Growing with the Corporate Bond Market

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Ballroom, The Renaissance Makati City Hotel

Highlights

The Philippine Bond Market In the Perspective of the Asian Region

Mr. Miyachi Masato
Head
Asian Bond Market Initiative
Asian Development Bank

The Opportunities in The Local Corporate Bond Market

Mr. Francisco C. Sebastian
President
First Metro Investment Corporation

The Challenges In The Philippine Corporate Bond Market

Mr. Victor A. Abola, Ph.D.
Economist
University of Asia and the Pacific

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Registration fee is P350.00. For inquiries and reservations please contact Caray Rey or Dr. Con Rumbaut at 840-5745; local 231446.

BUSINESS

ING, PNB creating mutual fund for OFWs

Fund size seen to reach \$500M

World Bank sees limited fallout from China share slide

BEIJING—A SHARP CORRECTION to the 18-month rally in Chinese stocks would not deal a serious blow to the economy, the World Bank said Wednesday.

"The main impact could be damage to the new-found confidence in the Chinese capital market. The impact on the real economy via reduced consumption and investment is likely to remain limited," the bank said in its latest quarterly update on China's economy.

Individuals own shares equivalent to just one-sixth of gross domestic product, while the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has estimated that banks' exposure to the stock market may add up to 300 billion yuan (\$39 billion), the report said.

That is a modest 1 percent of the banking system's deposit base and 5.5 percent of the stock market capitalization of tradable shares, it said.

"Nevertheless, large losses of financial wealth for specific groups, especially vulnerable groups like retirees and low income earners, could be, a policy risk, as it could

lead to pressure to bail them out, resulting in fiscal costs on the one hand, and moral hazard on the other," the bank said.

Shanghai's main index has more than tripled in 18 months and the bank warned in its report that, if prices continued to rise rapidly, the "risks of a sudden change in mood and sharp negative correction could increase."

Sure enough, the market fell hard on Wednesday after a midnight announcement by the government of a tripling in stamp tax to 0.3 percent.

Bert Hofman, lead economist in the bank's Beijing office, told a news conference the increase was small in relation to the profits that investors are hoping to make. As such it was unlikely to be decisive.

But he said it was the latest in a series of measures aimed at letting some air out of the market: monetary policy has been tightened; the authorities have been better at enforcing the ban on bank credit for buying stocks; capital outflows are being encouraged; and regulators have launched investigations into insider trading and price manipulation.

"In total they may add to cooling down some of the sentiment in the stock market," Hofman said. In particular, it should deter rapid churning of stocks by day traders.

The bank said additional measures could further moderate price rises, such as increasing the supply of IPOs and a further controlled increase in outflows under the Qualified Domestic Institutional Investor scheme.

"In the unlikely case that a stock market correction would significantly undermine economic growth and confidence, an easing of the macroeconomic policy stance may be appropriate, for instance via an easing of fiscal policy, with the exact channel best depending on the source of the weakness.

"In current circumstances of excess liquidity, the authorities would understandably be reluctant to further ease the monetary stance, but assuring that the payments and clearance system continues to function will be important in the case of a sharp correction," the bank said.

Reuters

By Doris C. Dumlaio

DUTCH BANKING GIANT ING AND PHILIPPINE National Bank have teamed up to create within this year a mutual fund for overseas Filipino workers with a size of up to \$500 million.

The two banks recently signed a memorandum of agreement to contribute \$15 million each in seed money to the mutual fund, to be called the ING International Filipino Mutual Fund, top bank officials said.

In an interview yesterday, ING Bank Philippine country manager Manuel Salak said the mutual fund would be set up and registered in Ireland and would be marketed across Europe and Asia.

"Our target fund size is \$200 million to \$500 million," Salak said.

A mutual fund is an investment entity that pools funds of unit holders for investment in various securities. The units or shares are redeemable by the fund on demand by the investor.

The value of the underlying assets of the fund—such as equities and debt papers denominated in peso, dollars or any other currency—influences the unit prices.

PNB president Omar Byron Mier said during the stockholders meeting on Tuesday that the bank had agreed to tap its overseas network to distribute the mutual fund.

Mier said the mutual fund would be "the first investment product of its kind that would allow overseas Filipinos to invest in."

PNB treasurer Ramon Lim said the minimum participation in the planned mutual

fund would be \$100 million, and would likely be launched first in Hong Kong and then rolled over to other markets, subject to compliance with regulatory requirements.

He said the mutual fund would likely find a robust market in the Middle East, which has a large population of OFWs.

He said the \$30 million seed money to be contributed by PNB and ING would be covered by a five-year lock-up period.

OFW remittances coursed through PNB, which has the largest overseas network among local banks, reached \$2.4 billion in 2006, accounting for 19 percent of the total market.

To further expand its global imprint and regain its status as the number one player in the OFW remittances business, PNB has established two wholly-owned subsidiaries—one in Austria and another in Spain—and opened two more banking units in Hong Kong.

Last April, PNB opened two additional subsidiary branches in Paris and Barcelona, bringing the total number of its overseas offices to 106.

"Even with the aggressive efforts of other financial institutions to challenge the bank's stronghold on the overseas remittance business, PNB has remained the bank of choice of global Filipinos for their remittance needs," Mier said.

With the downtrend in interest rates to historical lows and increasing awareness on financial products, more Filipinos are graduating from being mere savers to investors.

APC in talks with local banks for financing

By Abigail L. Ho and Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ABOITIZ POWER CORP IS IN talks with local banks for the financing of its two new hydropower projects in Davao worth P9 billion.

Luis Miguel Aboitiz, senior vice president for power generation at APC, said the 42-megawatt (MW) Sibulan plant and 38-MW Taguman facility would be funded by a combination of internal funds and syndicated loans.

"We're trying to get longer-term loans from the banks. Since these are two projects, we'll have to apply for separate loans," he said.

The firm would break ground for the Sibulan plant next month, having already secured all the necessary permits for the project, Aboitiz said.

Work on the Tamugan plant would start by next year, and construction should be completed by 2010 or 2011.

The Tamugan facility would cost around P4 billion, he said.

In a related development, APC said it had secured the approval of the Philippine Stock Exchange for the listing of the company's 7.4 billion shares in relation to its planned public offering this year.

APC has proposed to offer 1.7 billion common shares through a primary offer and another 300 million shares to cover for strong demand, Aboitiz Equity Ventures said in a disclosure.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) earlier approved the planned initial public offering of APC which was seen to raise P10 billion to P12 billion for the company.

In documents filed with the SEC, APC said its offer price was estimated at P6 a share.

The offer period will be from July 4 to 10.

Proceeds of the IPO will be used to beef up APC's financial muscle for the expansion of its generating capacity by participating in the ongoing privatization of National Power Corp. and by pursuing new power projects.

Cement firm gives master masons their dues

By Tina Arceo-Dumlaio

NO STRUCTURE WILL STAND without masons, and yet they have not been accorded the care and recognition that they deserve.

That was until cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines Inc. launched its Galing Mason Program in September 2004 to enhance the knowledge and skills of local masons and to recognize the best of them.

Holcim corporate affairs head Jocelyn J. Perez said in an interview that Holcim has adopted the masonry training as its flagship corporate social responsibility program in the Philippines because it recognizes the value of the masons to its business and the construction industry as a whole.

"The masons are the ones who directly handle our product, so we have to do our part to help upgrade their skills," Perez said.

Under the Galing Mason Program, masons go through a seven-day training course, during which they learn the proper way to handle and make the most of the cement they use.

Perez said most masons learn only by working first as apprentice masons before eventually handling the cement themselves.

They hardly use measuring equipment to come up with the right mixture of cement and water, which defines the quality of the finished concrete.

With the basic training course provided by Holcim, masons learn the basics of the properties of cement, masonry tools and equipment, bonds and joints, car-



FEMALE masons learn the tricks of the trade.

penry, trade mathematics and safety in the workplace.

The more advanced masons learn about coloring cement, meth-

CORPORATE CITIZEN

ods of masonry construction, plan reading, concrete repairs and corrections, form design, special wall and floor surface finishes and clay masonry techniques, among others.

To qualify for the program, the male or female trainee must be at least 18 years old, an elementary school graduate and has two to three years experience as a mason helper.

Perez said the training curriculum was developed in partnership with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, Philippine Constructors Association

and the National Union of Building and Construction Workers.

"We consider the masons as our main stakeholder and the program will hopefully help them make educated decisions in their work," she said.

The culminating activity of the training program usually involves the plastering of walls at selected Gawad Kalinga project sites.

"We usually train people who are already working as masons but with no formal training," Perez said. "With this program, they get to upgrade skills and learn new techniques to become better masons."

Holcim conducts the free training about 10 times a year. Some 1,400 masons from all over the country have undergone training

since the program started.

Holcim is also proud to sponsor the Holcim Galing Mason Olympics, which is held every two years to showcase local masons' skills.

Categories include tiling, plastering and laying blocks, and it is open to all masons, even those who did not go through the skills training program.

Contestants first compete in the regional Olympics and the winners go on to the National Olympics. Chosen winners are then sent to the Asean Olympics and then to the world masons competition.

But perhaps the more awaited competition is the Galing Mason Award. Every three years, Holcim searches for masons who are "hard working and persevering; who strive to improve knowledge and skills; show pride and dedication to their work and are responsible members of the family and the community."

"We hold the award to enhance and promote the image of the masons and the masonry trade and recognize the contribution of masons in our society," Perez said.

Last year's winner was Sergio Barliso, a Cebu-based mason who learned the craft from his father, and who came out ahead of 90 other nominees.

Barliso said that, while the award has opened doors to employment overseas, he would stay in the Philippines.

He added that he would love to get the chance to build the smoothest roads for the country.

Holcim believes that, through its program, it would be able to train more masons like Barliso.

DFNN profit up 133% in '06

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS provider Diversified Financial Network, Inc. said it had posted a net income of P77.6 million in 2006, a turnaround from the P55.4 million in losses incurred in 2005.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the firm said group revenue rose 145 percent to P236.4 million in 2006 from P96.2 million in 2005.

Efforts to reduce cost and risk while expanding the business revenue in the gaming and business process outsourcing (BPO) boosted the group's performance, DFNN chair and CEO Ramon C. Garcia Jr. said in a statement.

DFNN's revenue comes mainly from the provision of IT solutions to business process outsourcing and retail financial firms. It also earn from online gaming products and other services.

Backed by its domain expertise in financial services, DFNN became a proprietary software technology, wireless, and secure solutions partner of leading companies.

Revenue growth in 2006 was fueled mainly by the 293-percent rise in service fees to P210 million.

JPEPA benefits 'questionable'

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE JAPAN-PHILIPPINES ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP Agreement must be renegotiated or junked as its complicated rules may deprive local exporters of its promised benefits and open doors to technical smuggling, Jeremy I. Gatdula, a professor of trade law at the Ateneo de Manila University, said in an interview.

Gatdula said that whatever income was expected from intended exports to Japan could be mitigated by the complicated rules of origin (ROO) of the JPEPA.

Under trade pacts, the ROO defines which products are considered "made" in a country that is party to the pact, and thus provides limits on which items are qualified for preferential treatment.

According to Gatdula, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' agreement on the common effective preferential tariff (CEPT) schedule is already complicated as it is now and it only has eight rules that could fit three pages and, with annexes, would run for about 40 pages.

"(In comparison,) the JPEPA ROOs come in about 150 pages, not including the necessary references to other rules like the World Customs Or-

ganization's Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding or HS System, the shipping industry's general rate increases or GRIs and "something called the 'Operational Procedures on Trade in Goods and Rules of Origin,'" he said.

He said the CEPT ROO used only one methodology in calculating the origin of a good. This provides that the product must contain at least 40 percent value added from within Asean.

The JPEPA ROO uses three methodologies—change in tariff classification, value added, and process of manufacture—all with their own complexities and quirks, related rules, and principles.

"If the Japanese decide to be strict in the application of the ROOs, our exports are going to have a difficult time getting the supposed benefits under JPEPA," Gatdula said.

"On the import side, the very complexity of the ROOs could very well lead to an undetectable rise in 'technical smuggling,'" he said.

Gatdula said the Philippines had experience in using only one ROO methodology while JPEPA required the use of two additional methodologies that we have not tried before.

"These two seem simple but are really quite complex in application," he said.



Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	One lot - Supply, installation and commissioning of one unit Banknote Disc Counting Machine with Table Stand per BSP specifications
Approved Budget for the Contract	US\$52,080.00
Completion Period	Within sixteen (16) weeks after opening of Letter of Credit

Prospective bidders should have undertaken similar contract within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting 31 May 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	15 June 2007; 10:30 a.m.
3. Opening of Bids	03 July 2007; 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,300.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

IN THIS ISSUE

■ Puto, suman, atbp in Country Cooking /D1

LIFESTYLE

Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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■ American grill house in Taguig City /E2

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY



Chef J Gamboa tells the story of how Team Philippines won in the Gourmet Team Challenge category at the recent Hong Kong International Culinary Classic

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

THIS IS OUR TIME AND I knew it! It is through food that the Philippines will be hailed great again!

Today, I am stepping aside and allowing chef J. Gamboa, manager of the Philippine culinary team that won the gold in Hong Kong, to tell their thrilling tale of victory, and I do so with great pride and immense joy. J.G., take it away...

We got gold!

"I am so happy!" I can't recall how many times I said that since our team was called on-stage to accept the gold award for the Gourmet Team Challenge category of the Hong Kong International Culinary Classic (HKICC) held within the Hofex May 13-16.

We had set our sights on the prize, worked so hard to get it, and now that they were actually handing the medals to us, I couldn't believe it! We relived our adventure while we celebrated our victory in Lei Yue Mun Seafood Village.

It was in October 2006 when team captain Ariel Manuel and I, together with Les Toques Blanchés-Philippines president Othmar Frei, made the decision to enter the competition. From there, we proceeded to complete the team line-up. We had no problems convincing Boy Timola and Tony Bleza of Shangri-La to join us. Arnold Guevarra of Mandarin Oriental likewise accepted our invitation with much enthusiasm. And Buddy Trinidad of Park Avenue Desserts was more than happy to take on the challenge with us.

The team got together weekly for menu conceptualization, recipe testing and tasting sessions. The challenge was to come up with a cold buffet spread of 27 different items such as tapas, soup, appetizers, desserts, cakes, seafood and poultry platters that we could prepare in 24 hours and set up on the table within an hour.

Practice makes perfect

We held our first practice dinner at Milky Way, took note of everyone's comments and made the necessary revisions for the second practice dinner at Ariel's Lolo Dad's Café.

By the third practice session at Cirkulo, our table was already draped in Rajo Laurel couture. To make sure we had perfected our drill, we hosted another practice session off site from the Cirkulo kitchen at Gourdo's, The Fort, simulating the time table and transportation that we would be following in Hong Kong. Chefs-in-the-making Andy Tabotabo of CCA Manila and Lolo Dad's Marge Villena provided us with assistance every step of the way.

As the designated team manager, I was tasked to raise the much-needed funds. Luckily, we had more than enough friends in the industry who were willing to bet on the Philippine team. Much appreciation goes out to Gourdo's, Werdenberg International Corporation, PTC, Philippine Airlines, Brother's Burger, Meat and Livestock Australia, Mida Foods, Alternatives Food Corporation, San Miguel Great Food Solu-

HOW THE GOLD/ C3

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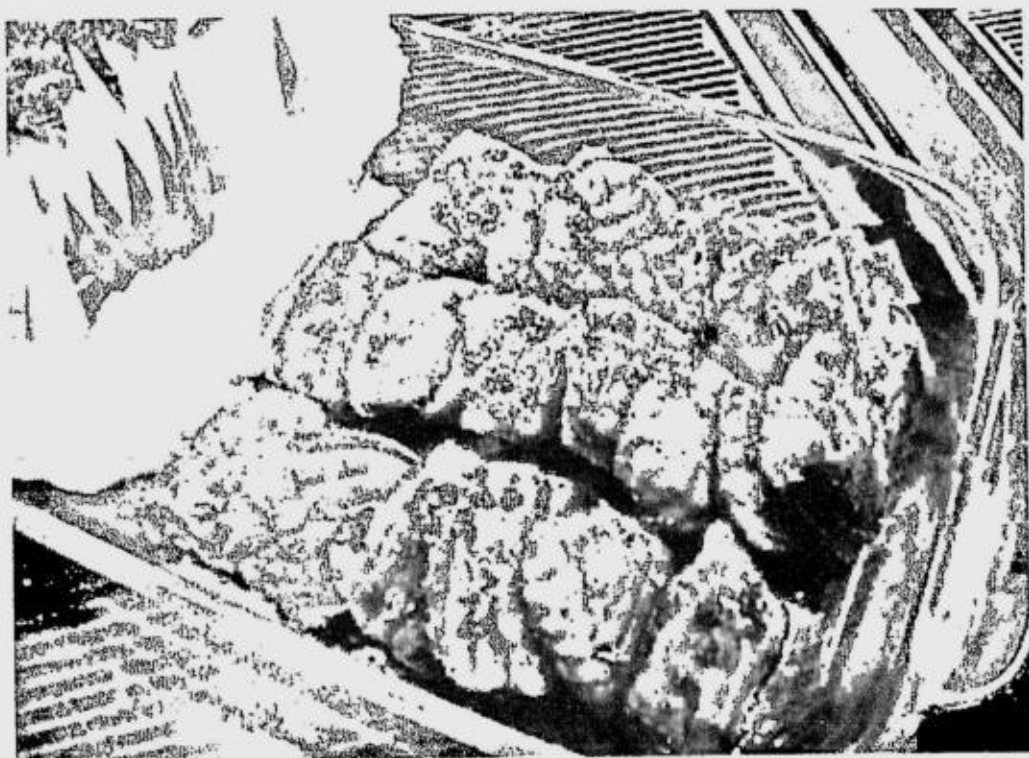
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SALMON Teppan



SAISAKI Niku Festival

150 dishes all in one place

THE ULTIMATE BUFFET IN just one place is what Dads and its sister restaurants Saisaki and Kamayan offer food lovers.

After undergoing renovation, Dads, Saisaki and Kamayan restaurants at SM Megamall building B reopened recently.

The renovation was designed to improve further service at the three restaurants so as to respond better to the needs of consumers.

All in all, the three restaurants, which can seat 700 people, offer 150 dishes, showcasing the best of Filipino, Thai and Japanese cooking.

Every month, Dads restaurant also offers its customers a chance to sample a new dish or a familiar one but with a twist. Of course, whether it is a new concoction or an old fa-

vorite, the quality remains consistent.

The renovation has resulted in several noteworthy changes. To make the restaurant more appealing to younger clients, the walls have been covered in colorful murals. Buffet tables have been modernized to give customers the feeling of dining in a hotel.

"We mostly did the architecture. We opted not to be too heavy on details and not appear expensive," said Veejay Villavicencio, managing director of Edsa and Megamall branches.

The merienda buffet, which draws twice the size of customers during lunch and dinner, will continue, of course.

Villavicencio said, "Inaabanang talaga ang merienda. The funny thing is a lot of customers are fond of siomai. So two people may just grab all 90 pieces of siomai... [but] as long as they are happy and satisfied, then there's nothing to worry about. We are hap-



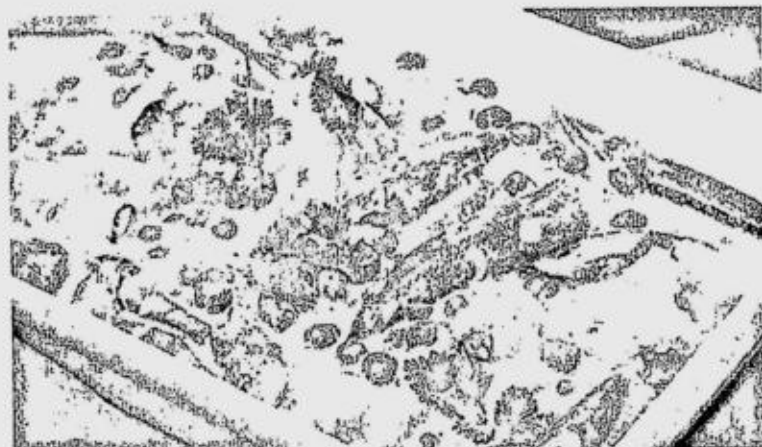
KOREAN Kalbi Chim

py for them."

With the renovation, the most popular dishes, the very best from the three restaurants, are now all available in just one area.

So whether you are having lunch with the

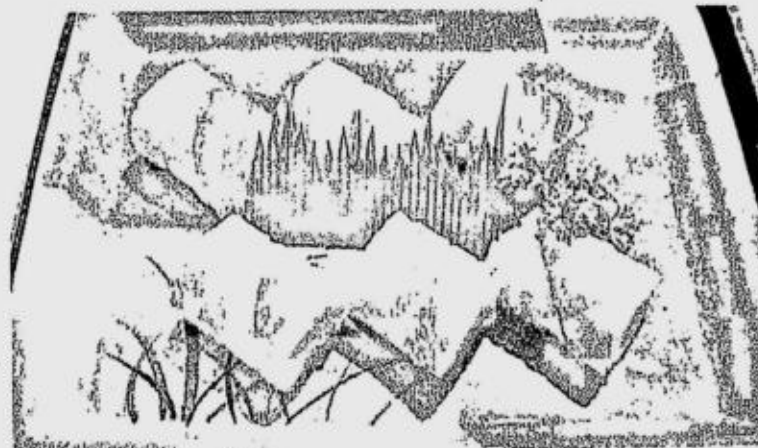
family, going out for merienda with the barkada or a dinner date with your special someone, you will no doubt find what you like at the incomparable Dads Ultimate Buffet. *Madelaine D. Cabrera, Contributor*



INDONESIAN Cashew Nut Korma



EBIKO Gonkan



EBI Kani Kyuri Bou

Limited-edition treats

WITH SEVERAL MORE HOT DAYS ahead before the rainy season sets in, cool off with the ice cream generations have come to know.

Magnolia ice cream treats you to even more delights with its special, exclusive, limited-edition flavors that are loaded with real fruit bits for tantalizing texture, added nutrition and extra energy you need.

Chocoholics can relish the Mud Pie 'Banana Surprise, an exciting medley of mud pie ice cream, chunks of chewy brownies and ripe bananas.

For fruit lovers, there is the Peach Mango Melba consisting of Del Monte sun-ripened peaches and mangoes bathed in an ice cream base.

Moms and dads can have the all-time favorite Magnolia Classics flavors of Mango and Ube.

Magnolia Gold Label provides added

excitement with combinations of Macapuno with Ube swirl, and the quintessential Creamy Halo-Halo.

The whole family will surely enjoy the classic flavors and textures of these timeless ice cream variants.

What's more, Magnolia's distinctive white tubs are microwaveable and reusable—perfect for families and barkada on the road or on vacation.

Magnolia Ice Cream Limited Edition, Classic, and Gold Label flavors are available at supermarkets and grocery stores.

Simply look for the white tub that bears the trusted seal of goodness and quality of Magnolia.

Magnolia Ice Cream, another quality product of San Miguel Corp., is also available at neighborhood Monterey meat shops and San Miguel Food Shops.



Local brandy's new look

DESTILERIA LIMTUACO, THE oldest distillery in the country, takes Napoleon VSOP Brandy a notch higher to join the league of imported brandies.

As part of its commitment to improve continuously its products, the distillery moves away from the traditional and dark look of brandies.

The new bottle of Napoleon is clear emerald green with a sophisticated gold-foil label featuring a modern interpretation of the original. It is capped with a special imported Guala Closure with a nonrefillable fitting.

The new blend, slightly lower in strength at 72 proof or 36 percent alcohol by volume but with greater depth of character, is smooth and mellow. It has a well-rounded body, flavor and aroma for a more pleasurable



drinking experience.

It also comes in an elegant gift canister to make it the perfect gift for any occasion.

Drink New Napoleon VSOP neat or chilled and even straight from the freezer.

Survey looks into Asians' food habits and kitchen style

TO GAIN FURTHER INSIGHT into consumers' eating and kitchen habits across nine different Asian markets, Electrolux has partnered with Reader's Digest magazine to conduct an Asian survey of consumers' food consumption, purchasing and preparation habits, as well as preferred kitchen style.

Results so far reveal some very interesting trends and preferences. Reader's Digest is currently analyzing the results and expects to release survey findings early in June.

More than 360,000 questionnaires were sent out with the March issue of Reader's Digest to subscribers in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and India.

Electrolux is conducting a similar but sepa-

rate food survey for Vietnam, Japan and China with the help of AC Nielsen.

More than 10,000 completed forms were received from Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand within just two weeks after the questionnaires were sent out. To Electrolux, the response demonstrated that food was a subject close to the heart of many Asians. Questions included in the Electrolux food survey were:

- Which meal do you think is the most important?
- Where are you most likely to buy your fresh food?
- Who usually decides on the main meal menu each day?
- Where do you and your family usually eat at home?

Brad Tribble, president, Electrolux major appliances East Asia, said: "Electrolux is con-

stantly pioneering advancement in kitchen design to meet the growing needs of its consumers. The Electrolux Asian Food Survey was specifically developed to garner more detailed information about Asian consumer habits to enable us to customize our products to suit Asian needs—needs which we find are very different from consumers in Europe and the United States and therefore warrant a different product approach."

"Reader's Digest is the ideal vehicle for assessing consumer preferences. Being the largest-paid subscription-based magazine in Asia and the world, they have direct access to people's homes, reaching all members of the household. We have a huge number of readers who are highly responsive. Our readership profile is a representative cross-section of Asian society," said Simon Cholmeley, regional advertising director, Reader's Digest Asia.

McKester's



HEALTHY FOOD

Peanut butter, one of the most loved foods through generations, is also a healthy food with many nutritional benefits. It is a rich and natural source of protein, essential vitamins, and minerals packed with energy boosters. Peanut butter also has phytochemicals that help reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers. Studies show that two tablespoons of peanut butter provide 13 percent of the United States' recommended daily intake of protein. It is rich in protein, essential vitamins and minerals. McKester's Peanut Butter is available in super creamy and super crunchy variants in all leading supermarkets nationwide.

How the gold was won

From page C1

tions, Unilever Foodsolutions, Happy Living Fine Wines, Philon Wines, Actron, Sweetlink Silicone-zone, Royal Country Marketing, Golden Acres, and Q&H Foods. Also within my turf was organizing the logistics and coordinating publicity. For those, I had Nana Nadal, our PR whiz kid, to back me up.

Before we knew it, we were donning our team shirts, boarding PAL flight PR 306 for Hong Kong and checking into Disneyland Hotel!

Barely spending time in our beautiful rooms, we were given a tour of Disneyland's grand kitchen, which would serve as our headquarters for the week before heading out to the city for ingredient shopping. We did the rounds of the supermarkets to source the best and freshest products—Great Food Hall inside Seibu, Taste Supermarket at Citygate Mall in Tung Chung, and City Super in IFC where we met a fellow Pinoy named Yolly, who graciously selected the best Tasmanian Salmon, US Scallops, and Japanese Sea Urchin for us. After 12 hours of walking and endless MTR rides, we returned to our hotel with loads of shopping bags.

The rest of our itinerary was booked with more marketing, preparations and individual competitions.

Arnold bagged a bronze for his dish in the Western Cuisine (Professional) Red Mullet & Prawn category. Through all these, the uber fun crew from Shop TV tagged along and kept their cameras rolling while Fernando Aracama injected his spiels every now and then. (Watch out for the TV special to be aired on "2nd Avenue" on ETC and see how we fared as pseudo-actors.)

In between all the work, we managed to squeeze in a courtesy call to Silicone Zone's headquarters in Tsim Sha Tsui. There Nelson Co of Sweetlink and Silicone Zone's Felix Tang offered us a veritable buffet of silicone kitchen products for the competition. We left their office lugging bundles of silicone products that we added to our kitchen arsenal from Calphalon and Wustof, thanks to our pals at Gourdos. We were definitely armed and ready for culinary battle!

24-hour countdown

Although tired from the long days, the team was in high spirits when D-day arrived. We hit the kitchen and worked on our *mise en place* as soon as the 24-hour countdown started. Everyone stayed awake round-the-clock, anxious and excited but mainly not wanting to miss out on anything. Our schedule was followed to the dot.

Production started with a team prayer led by Buddy and continued non-stop except for one-hour scheduled breaks for lunch, *merienda* and dinner of course! We loaded the refrigerated truck at 6 a.m. and I was off to the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre with all the food and equipment while the rest of the team tailed the truck in a convoy of vans.

Tension built as we unloaded and wheeled in our stuff. While we were preoccupied with organizing our provided "catering kitchen," James Antolin and Brando Santos of CCA, Mia Manuel, Butchie Ayuyao and Fernando made sure our table and all the appointments on top were in perfect order.

At 10:30 a.m., the timer started to tick anew. We had an hour to get everything properly set up. The crowd gathered and whispered encouragement while we brought



CHEFS Ariel Manuel, Tony Bleza, Buddy Trinidad, Boy Timola, Arnold Guevarra and J Gamboa



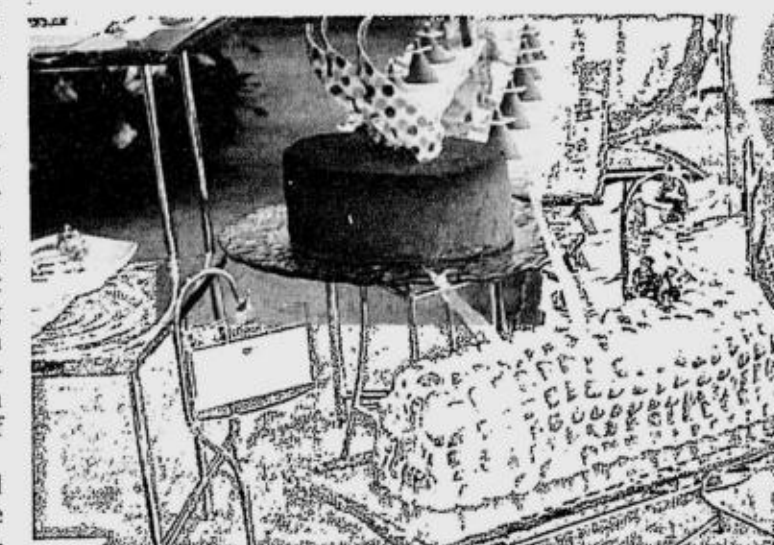
CHEF Tony Bleza's bread display



THE JUDGES at work



FOIE Gras and Duck Platter



CHEF Buddy Trinidad's Tropical Chocolate Cake and Lemon Passion Fruit Meringue Log

out trays and arranged the dishes as we had practiced several times. The judges eyed our every action.

Among the board were Asia's most respected chefs: Otto Wiebel, director of kitchens of the Raffles Group Singapore; John Sloan, Singapore Airlines execu-

tive chef and World Association of Chefs Societies Asian continental director; Winni Bruger from Vienna; Marco Brueschweiler from Bangkok; and Angelo McDonnell from Hong Kong.

By 11:30 a.m., the team was ready to escort the judges for a

We held our breaths as the judges tasted each item but they only had good words for our masterpiece

walk around the buffet.

Taste test

The next order of the day involved serving the judges their samples. We held our breaths as they tasted each item. Our worry was all for naught because they had nothing but good words for our masterpiece. Otto said: "Guys, the food looked great on the buffet, but tasted even better! Your food looks and tastes very fresh and delicious. Congratulations! Well done!"

We all got pats on the back and firm handshakes as they stood from the table and hopped to the next entry. Their farewells were peppered with congratulations and insistence that we be present at the awarding ceremony scheduled for the following evening. That kept our hopes and adrenaline high as we cleaned up and returned to our hotel.

Past forward to the awarding ceremony. We literally jumped with joy when the host said "Team Philippines!" The hall echoed with cheers and laughter as we made our way to the stage. Still busy showing off our gold medals and certificates, exchanging high fives and hugs, we were caught un-

aware when we were called again, this time to receive the "Best of the Best" trophy and a check for HK\$8,000!

Once more, applause reverberated in the room. All the hard work paid off. We were bringing home the gold... and more!

It was quite a wild ride, but enjoyable every step of the way! Like any project, we had our share of mishaps and near disasters. But I am proud to say that the team did not look back and just carried on like professionals. Heartwarming was the support of the Filipinos we came across during the trip.

Friends from Manila were also on hand to lend support: Snake River Farms' Kawshik Sehwan, Joanne Limmoanco and Jen Anarna from Unilever, Helene Pontejos of San Miguel Purefoods Greatfoods, Mandarin Oriental's

executive chef Thomas Wenger, Willie Go of Royal Country Marketing and Charlene Tieng of Gourdos.

Also gratifying was the work of our young apprentices, Marge and Andy, who worked non-stop to make sure our ingredients and equipment were in order, ready at a moment's notice to organize, lift, fetch, take down notes and make arrangements for dinner. This was truly a Philippine effort! I had so much fun, I can't wait to do it again! Singapore competition next year, anyone?

(As the team's token of appreciation for INQUIRER readers' support, we are featuring some of the winning recipes in the succeeding weeks on Kitchen Rescue!)

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

TRAVELING WITH ALLERGIES

A Guide to Regional Triggers and Symptom Management

When planning for a trip, allergy sufferers should be aware of the allergens waiting for them on the road and at their destination. Even if travelers do not experience severe allergy symptoms in their hometown, exposure to new environments can worsen symptoms or even trigger previously unknown symptoms.

With careful planning, allergy sufferers can control their symptoms and ensure they do not spend their vacation or business trip congested and sneezing. Following are a few tips to help manage symptoms while traveling:

Choosing a Destination

• Locations with mild and dry climates are best for allergy sufferers.

• Dust mites cannot survive at higher altitudes, so the mountains may provide an escape for people with these perennial allergies.

• Check pollen counts and weather forecasts, and avoid traveling to certain areas during pollination seasons.

• Ask a doctor about destinations not recommended for people with severe asthma, as there is a growing body of evidence that points to an association between allergies and more serious conditions, such as asthma.

Method of Transportation

A Gallup survey found that 25 percent of drivers who suffer from hay fever said that their ability to drive was affected by symptoms, sedating medications or lack of sleep due to aller-

gy suffering at night. And if allergies are causing sinus pressure, air travel may be painful during takeoffs and landings.

• Turn on the air conditioner and keep the windows closed while driving, especially when traveling through areas with high pollen counts.

• When traveling by plane or train, bring your own allergen free pillow instead of using those provided.

Managing Allergy Symptoms

• Visit a doctor prior to departure to properly diagnose symptoms, receive treatment and ask what to avoid while traveling.

• Pack an "allergy kit" consisting of tissues, allergen-free pillow encasings, and enough allergy medication to last 1 or 2 days longer than planned just in case the vacation is extended. LORATADINE (CLARITIN™) with Formula 15-24-0 provides relief in as fast as 15 minutes and lasts up to 24 hours with virtually 0 drowsiness. As the only antihistamine approved by the Federal Aviation Administration in the USA, LORATADINE (CLARITIN™) would be a safe way to go, especially if you find yourself behind the wheel.

• Request non-smoking hotel rooms that do not allow pets. Upon arrival, ask for synthetic pillows, rather than feather pillow found at many hotels.

• Shower and change into fresh clothing after being outdoors because pollen from the air can collect on clothing, skin, and hair.

Cheesy goodness in a pop



CHEESY Pops pizza

AFTER THE SUCCESS of its Stuffed Crust and Cheesy Volcano, Pizza Hut once more revolutionizes the industry with a new appetizing product.

Cheesy Pops is the only pizza that has 24 "pullable and poppable" outer crusts filled with three cheese flavors—mozzarella, cheddar, and parmesan—in one stuffed crust pizza. Cheesy Pops hails from the same sumptuous Pizza Hut line of pizzas; the only difference is that its crust is a treat in itself.

The new Cheesy Pops pizza has an irresistible pullable outer crust, specially made up of 18 delicious bite-size "cheesy pops" that are slightly seasoned with garlic butter flavor.

"The whole idea is to have fun in a pizza," Michael Tang, Pizza Hut's marketing director for Asia Pacific, says. "A pizza does not only have to taste good, it also has to look good." A huge hit in the United States, Malaysia, Korea, and Singapore, where it was first introduced, Tang is positive that this offering is also something that the Filipinos will surely enjoy.

American comfort food recipes

BUTTER DINER OFFERS TRUE AMERICAN comfort foods like burgers, steaks and chops, salads, pasta, waffles, pancakes, sandwiches, and milkshakes.

Located at the ground floor of Shopwise Arcade, Gen. Aguinaldo Avenue, Araneta Center, Cubao, the restaurant was inspired by American diners in the 1950s.

Butter Diner, which also serves Filipino and Italian dishes as well as assorted appetizers, desserts, soups, and beverages, is the only restaurant in the country using 30 different kinds of butter.

Established last year by Dennis Gan and Melissa Sison and their foreign partner and consultant chef, Jeff Allen, the restaurant is open 6:30 a.m.-2 a.m. Call 4210030.

Here are some Butter Diner recipes:

Rosemary's Roasted Chicken

4 pc chicken legs, quartered
1 tbsp rosemary, dried
1 tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
¼ c olive pomace

1 c red onions quartered
½ c white wine
1 c chicken stock
Mix rosemary, salt, black pepper and olive pomace.

Pat dry chicken after washing. Place in a large roasting pan. Disperse onions and garlic evenly. Using your fingers, rub the rosemary mix on to the bird, under, over the skin and the cavity covering every surface. Cover roasting with aluminum foil and place in the oven.

After 20 minutes invert the chicken and cover again with aluminum foil and roast for another 10 minutes. After 10 minutes remove the aluminum foil and roast for 5 minutes to color the chicken.

After roasting remove the chicken and set aside. Place roasting pan on a burner, while chicken cools. Pour white wine and chicken stock and simmer for 15 minutes until liquid is reduced. Pass the whole mixture through a blender to thicken sauce.

Serve with mashed potatoes or rice. Serves four.

Hot Spinach Dip

500 g spinach, stems taken out and washed
1 c onions, finely chopped
½ c celery, finely chopped
50 g mozzarella
50 g cream cheese
50 ml all-purpose cream
50 g blue cheese
50 g Eden cheese
1 c bread crumbs
½ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp black pepper
1 tsp salt
1 tsp garlic
2 tbsp butter oil

ROSEMARY'S Roasted Chicken



5 g basil, chopped finely
10 pc fried tortilla for dipping
In a skillet, heat butter over moderate heat. Sauté garlic, onions and spinach until spinach begins to sweat.

While cooking spinach, place all remaining ingredients (except tortilla chips) in a large food processor. Once spinach is cooked, place into the food processor and blend well. Mixture must be lumpy and thick. Cool and store in the chiller. Serve with crispy tortillas. Serves four.

5-layer Nacho Dip

1st layer:

¼ kg ground beef, with fat
1 tsp Italian seasoning
1 tsp garlic powder
4 tbsp tomato paste
Pinch of cayenne pepper
½ c onions, chopped
½ tsp pepper
2 tbsp vegetable oil

2nd layer:

1 c sour cream
½ c bell peppers, chopped
Mix together.

3rd layer:

1 c corn kernels
¼ c onions, chopped
1 tsp chopped cilantro
1 tsp butter

4th layer:

2 c tomatoes, finely chopped
1 c onions, finely chopped
3 tbsp calamansi juice squeezed out
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
2 tbsp cilantro

5th layer:

2 c Eden cheese, grated
5.5 bags nacho chips

In a skillet, sauté onions and ground beef. Add all seasoning and simmer for 10 minutes. Set aside. Mix together sour cream and chopped bell peppers.

Sauté corn kernels, chopped onions, chopped cilantro, and butter and cool. Set aside.

Pass through a food processor chopped Pinoy tomatoes and onions.

Arrange nachos according to the order above. Top with grated cheese and pass through the colander for two minutes or until cheese melts. Serves four.

Start Them Young.

How you can play an active role in your child's early learning.

Your child's experiences during the early years are critical to brain development. As a parent, you have a very important part in helping stimulate healthy brain growth by providing a nurturing environment.

Combining the forces of nature and nurture

At birth, your child's brain is only one-fourth its adult size. By age 3, however, the brain expands rapidly and reaches roughly 80% of its size during adulthood.

This growth in size and volume is due to the formation of billions of nerve cells, or neurons, in the brain during the first few years of life. Like seedlings, these individual neurons sprout long branching dendrites that transmit messages to other cells through electrical impulses called synapses.

While genetics plays a role in determining intelligence, a loving environment helps support the continuous wiring process that allows the different regions of the brain to coordinate and work together efficiently.

Cuddling, reading with, talking to and listening closely to your child help spark the connections in the brain. Over time, neural pathways that are frequently excited become stronger, while those that are hardly used wither and fall away, in a process neuroscientists refer to as pruning.

How to create a stimulating environment

It need not cost much to establish an environment conducive to early learning. What's more important is how you intend to use these simple and basic materials:

Children's Books. For your young toddler, vinyl or cloth books durable and soft enough to chew are suitable. If you have an older toddler, however, hardcover books are more appropriate. It is best to have a variety of kinds for your child's book collection consisting of nursery rhymes, ABC books and storybooks.

Establish a daily read-aloud routine at the same time and in the same place each day. Reading aloud is "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading," according to the "Report of the Commission on Reading National Institute of Education, 1985 and 1998."

Stages in Reading:

1. Attention to book
2. Book handling
3. Pretend Reading
4. Attention to print
5. Retelling from Pictures
6. Use of Print Cues
7. Mature Reading

Writing Materials. Washable thick markers, paints, pencils, crayons and large paper are ideal for your child if he or she is still in the process of developing small muscle control and coordination.

As your child practices holding the tools for writing, the writing experiments are bound to be messy. Just leave your child alone! This stage is essential for discovering the fundamentals of shape, line and color.

Keep your toddler's writing materials in one place. This way, your child will have easy access to these magical things when he or she wants to scribble.



Stages in Writing:

1. Scribbling
2. Letters as design elements
3. Single letters as whole words
4. Single letter, single sound
5. Mature spelling



DVDs, CDs and Tapes. Books and children's songs on videos and records are another fun way to enjoy stories and music. You can use these electronic channels to expose your child to stories that he or she will enjoy, as well as introduce basic concepts of letters and numbers.

Entertaining short videos that encourage your child to dance or sing along are best for keeping the attention of your child.

Recite nursery rhymes and sing songs to your toddler. Hearing these often helps your child learn the patterns and rhythms of language.

Talk together about things that interest your child. Talking to your child about the things you do, see, and hear as you go about your day helps in developing vocabulary and grammar.

Toys. Practical and inexpensive toys as well as props made of materials from home can be used for pretend play and make-believe. This activity contributes to your child's creativity and supports literacy skills.

Alphabet wooden blocks, rubber or foam letters that can be dunked in the water during bath time and puzzles will help familiarize your child with letters and numbers.

These early learning tips are brought to you by DR. MARK G. REYESIO-CRUZ III in coordination with ABBOTT NUTRITION INTERNATIONAL. Dr. Cruz is a pediatrician-neurologist specializing in developmental and behavioral pediatrics. He obtained his medical degree from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine and trained as a fellow at the University of Washington Medical Center and Children's Hospital Regional Medical Center in the United States. Dr. Cruz is an expert in medical and educational issues on Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and Autism.



DR. MARK G. REYESIO-CRUZ III

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CHERRY Blossoms

Sushi bar opens at The Fort

JAPANESE RESTAURANT SAKAE Sushi, known for its conveyor belt and interactive menu, has opened a sushi bar at its Fort Bonifacio outlet.

In charge of the sushi bar is chef Toshihisa Simomachi, who has over 20 years of Japanese culinary experience.

Simomachi offers tips on how to prepare one of his popular Sakae Sushi creations, Cherry Blossoms, a thick *maki* roll made with salmon and cucumber enveloped in *nori*, sushi rice and tuna.

Cherry Blossoms

1½ sheets of *nori*
Sushi rice
Fresh salmon, ¼-inch strips
Cucumber, ¼-inch strips
Fresh tuna
Shredded cabbage and fish roe for garnish

To make sushi rice, cook two cups of uncooked short-grain rice. To make the seasoning, mix five tablespoons of rice wine vinegar, two teaspoons of sugar and ½ teaspoon of salt, and stir until the sugar dissolves. When the rice is cooked, transfer to a bowl and mix in the seasoning using a cutting and folding motion. Cover with a moist hand towel and set aside to cool.

When the sushi rice has cooled, lay a full sheet of *nori* on a bamboo mat and place another half sheet to extend it.

Cover with rice, about ¼ of an inch or less thick. Pack down and gently flip over so the *nori* faces you. Be sure to place a plastic wrap over the rice before flipping so the rice does not directly touch the bamboo mat.

At the center, lay the salmon strips and place the cucumber strips next to them.

Roll firmly the bamboo mat. Remove the bamboo mat and lay roll on the table.

Wrap the sliced tuna, about 10x6 inches in size and ¼ inch thick, around the roll.

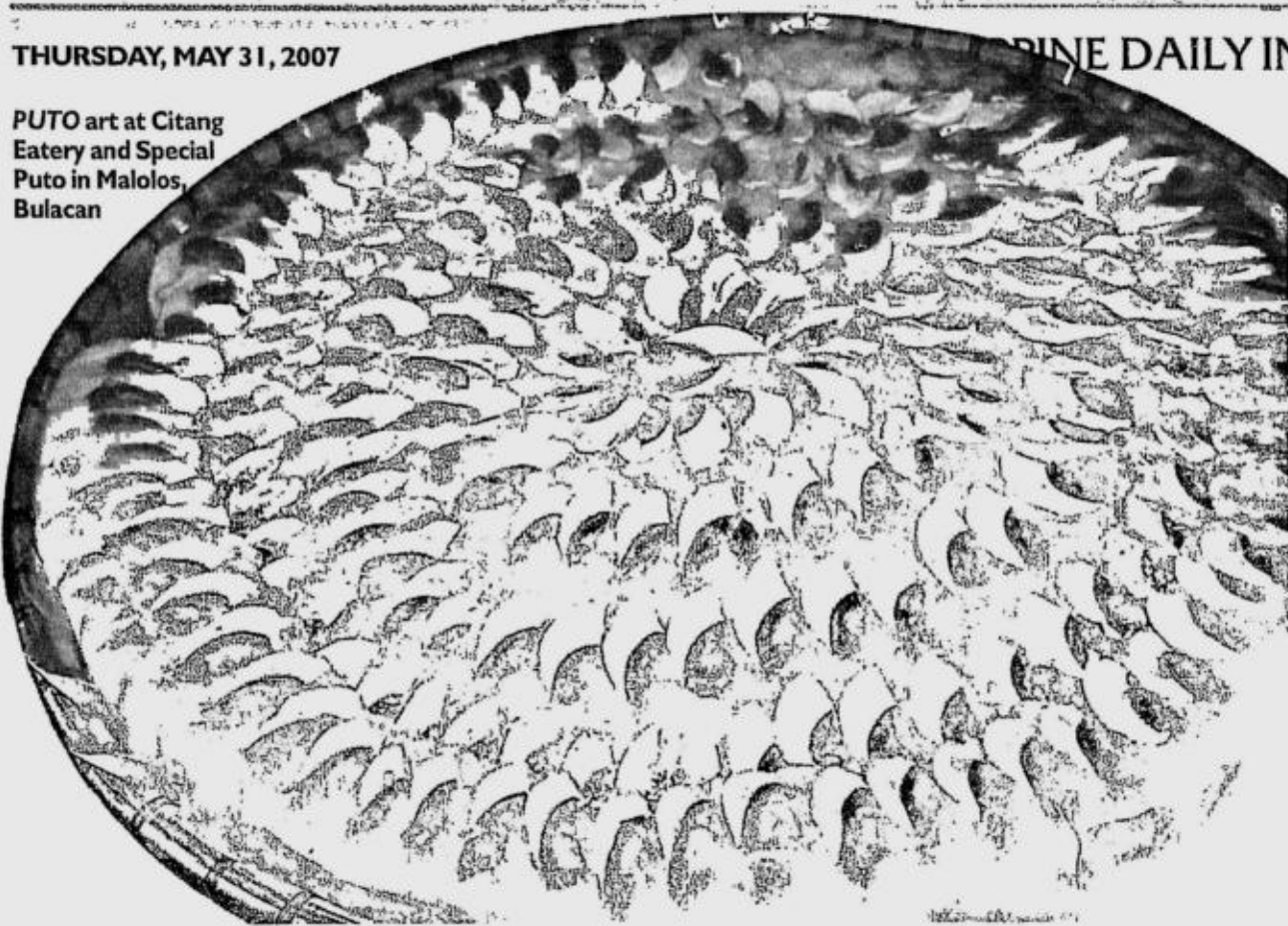
Slice the roll about an inch thick, making six cuts.

To plate, arrange the sliced rolls in a circle leaving a small space at the center for the sliced cabbages topped with fish roe for garnishing.

Serve with sushi sauce and wasabi for dipping.

Sakae Sushi's Sushi Bar is at Crescent West Park, Fort Bonifacio, Global City.

PUTO art at Citang Eatery and Special Puto in Malolos, Bulacan



COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

Dreaming of rice cakes

KAKANIN OR NATIVE CAKE is such a huge subject that choosing what to write about can make your head spin. But I do need to decide soon because the deadline for a book draws near.

"Rice Cake Dreams" was the title chosen even though *kakanin* is not made only of rice. The book will contain entries in last year's Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Award and some from members of the Manila Ladies Branch of the International Wine and Food Society.

The branch has published several collections of essays like "Comforting Cuisine" and "Slow Food: Philippine Culinary Traditions." *Puto* alone boggles the mind with its variety. It comes in all shapes—small round, big round, huge round, square, oval, tube, etc. Some *puto* are called by the place where they are made, among them Marilao, Biñan and Manapla. The latter has taken on the name of the Metro Manila street where it can be bought so people who order there know it as *Puto Reposo*.

My interviews with *puto* cooks have taught me that temperature has a lot to do with the successful outcome of the pieces. The *puto*-maker in Pangasinan said if the humidity was high, the *puto* would not rise.

For *puto* Manapla, leaves placed underneath have to be from *saba* banana otherwise the flavor will not be the same.

And, as in show biz, there are also rumors you pick up, like the one about two partners in Bulacan who split. Both have opened *puto* shops that stand side by side.

Puto maya in Bohol is glutinous white rice mixed with violet rice called *tapol*. When cooked, it tastes palpably of ginger.

The *Ilonggo puto lanson* is made of grated cassava, always foamy when cooked.

My brother-in-law likes to buy what he calls *Batangas puto*, round, all-white and cake-like. They are cut with a string into diamond-shaped pieces.

But nothing beats the way *puto* is presented at the Citang Eatery and Special Puto in Malolos. Salted eggs are cut into thin crescents then arranged in a radial pattern on top of the *puto*.

Elongated shape

Suman is another general name for a kind of *kakanin*, more elongated in shape and wrapped in an assortment of leaves.

All over the country, *suman sa ibos* is known by that name. It is made of steamed glutinous rice, wrapped in strips of *nipa* leaves that turn yellowish in color when cooked.

How you eat it depends on where you are and how you were taught. In my family, we always fry the *suman sa ibos* on both sides until the surface is toasted, wipe it with a lot of butter then sprinkle sugar on it. But we also like it



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LIFESTYLE

'Puto' alone boggles the mind with its variety. And it comes in all shapes and sizes—small round, big round, huge round, square, oval, tube. Some *puto* are called by the place where they are made



Coffee 101 plus...!!!

Have you always wanted to open your own café or want to learn how to be a more polished barista? Join Maya Kitchen for some fresh roasted world class coffee. It offers skills you will need to enter the world of coffee. Expand your knowledge of coffee history to brewing methods and techniques to produce the perfect cup. Check the schedule below and sign up now!!!

Coffee 101 (Barista Class): June 2 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Coffee History, Coffee Process, Trouble shooting, Machine know-how, proper grinding. Techniques to perfect froth. Actual preparation of popular Traditional Hot Coffee Concoction: Espresso, Cappuccino, Latte, etc.; Cold Coffee Concoctions and Spins. P1,500.

Steaks and Roast Galore: June 9 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Beef Tournados with Mustard Sauce, Pan Roasted Rosemary Chicken with Basil Mashed Potatoes Pan Ajus, Roasted Pork with Apple sauce, Crispy Salmon with Siciliana Sauce, Osso Buco Steak with lecture & preparation of basic steak, sauces, marinades & techniques of grilling. P1,000.

Modern Italian Pasta: June 16 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Chicken Ragout with handmade Stracchi Pasta, Confit Pork Belly, Saffron Pasta with Angel Hair Pasta, Vegetarian Pasta, Pancetta & Mushroom with workshop on preparing handmade fresh pasta. P1,000.

Bar Tending: June 16 (Sat) 2-6 p.m. Basic tools, Classifications of Wine & Spirits, Types of Bar Glasses & Usage, Mixing Serving of Popular Cocktail Drinks including Snacks. P1,500.

Rice Toppings & Home Processed Meats: June 23 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Garlic Rice, Pineapple Rice, Yang Chow Rice, Saffron Rice, Tapa Tips, Tocino, Native Longganisa & Crispy Corned Beef. P900.

Halal Cooking: June 30 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Authentic Techniques of Preparing Chicken Biryani, Shawarma Chicken, Halwa (Sweet Semolina), Poori (Deep fried Chapatie) & Chana Curry (Chick Peas Curry) By Halal Expert. P1,000.

CERTIFICATE COURSES FOR ADULTS (Limited enrollment, pre-registration required)
Fundamentals of Bakery Production: June 5-8/19-22 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Basic & commercial baking techniques applicable to the use of various ready mixes, yeast breads, quick breads, pies, cookies & cakes includes theory practice for Commercial Scale Productions with Free Baking Cookbook. P5,000
Basic Culinary: June 13-15 (W-F) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., June 26-29 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation & safety; nutrition & nutritional cooking; proper mis-en-place of mirepoix, stocks, soups, sauces, marinades, use of herbs & spices combinations, proper purchasing, storage, techniques of disjuncting & boning poultry, filleting fish & meat fabrication. With actual preparation of dishes from appetizer, salad, eggs, pasta, seafoods, poultry & meats, dessert including garnishing for plate presentation. P6,000.

Cake Decorating: June 21 & 22 (TH-F) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Fundamentals of cake decorating: coloring, icing (Boiled, Caramel, Chocolate, Sugar, Simple Fondant Icing); Basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flowers including bunching techniques. Individual workshop on icing application & cake designing. Free cake decorating starter tips. P4,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph



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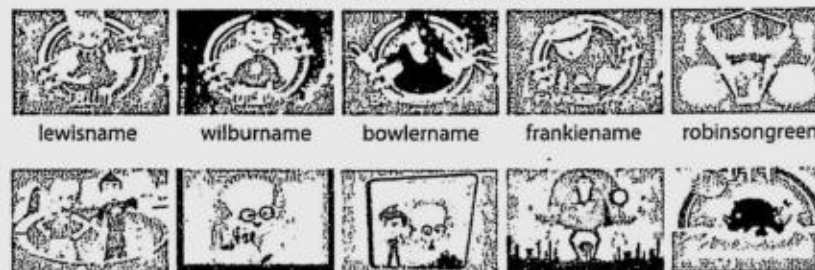
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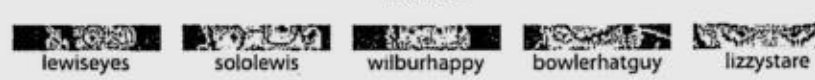
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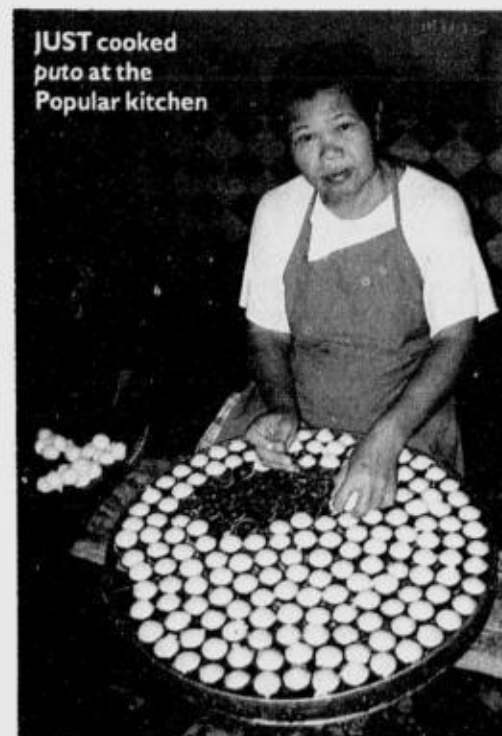


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DREAMING/D2

Two ways to enjoy wagyu

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF Culinary Arts offers the following classes:

June 1: Wagyu—Wagyu Carpaccio Done Two Ways: with Orange Glaze, with Truffle Oil and Foie Gras Shavings, Seared with Fruit Salsa; To-Die-For Herb Roasted Wagyu Gold Shortplate (Belly) with Sauces and Sides, Wagyu Yakimiku with Sauces, Wagyu Shabu-Shabu with Sauces

June 2: Italian Buffet—Great For Entertaining—(Special Class)—all new!—Appetizer: Do It Yourself Rock Roasted Mozarella with Condiments Serve on Grilled Baguette. Elegant Antipasto Salad & Insalata di Gamberetti. Soup: Pesto Minestrone. Pasta (two kinds): Salami & Alfredo Con Funghi. Main Course: Delicious Melt-In-Your-Mouth Wagyu Beef Cheeks Cooked Osso Buco Style with Risotto Milanese & Roasted Leg of Lamb with Italian Herbs with Honey Balsamic Glaze. Desserts: Tiramisu of Strawberries & Panna Cot-

ta: of Dark Chocolate with White Chocolate Mousse & Green Tea Panna Cotta with Almond-Lychee & Mascarpone Cream

June 4: From the Sea '07—all new!—Crabs Done 4 Ways: with Crab Fat Butter and Red Egg Sauce; with Delicious Black Bean Sauce; All New Than Long Crab Recipe with Home Made Pasta; Tom Yam Crabs Stir Fry. Fish: Whole Fried Lapu-lapu with Tausi Sauce; Whole Fried Seabass Escabeche, Steamed Lapu-Lapu in Coconut Milk, Sides

June 6: One Dish Pasta Meals '07—Double Cheese Pizzaghetti (Pizza Spaghetti), Pasta with Smoked Salmon in Vodka Sauce with Wood Chip Smoked Cod, Bacon Steaks with Pasta in Bell Pepper Cream Sauce, Herb Grilled Stuffed Chicken Legs with Seafood Pasta in Mushroom Sauce

New class schedules for May-July are now available. Call 9289296, 9273008.

Coffee and baking basics

Maya Kitchen is holding the class "Coffee Basic 101 (Barista Course)," on June 2, 2-6 p.m. This class covers history, process, troubleshooting, blend and machine know-how, proper grinding. Also included are techniques to perfect froth; preparation of popular traditional hot coffee concoctions: Espresso Doppio, Cappuccino, Latte, Macchiato; cold coffee concoctions: Millennium Kahlua, Milano Mokka and Mokka.

The class on "Fundamentals of Bakery Production" will be held on June 5-8, 2-6 p.m. Students can learn standard baking techniques, including the use of ready mixes, etc. Theory practice for commercial scale productions is also included. Participants get free Baking Cookbook.

"Steaks and Roast Galore" will be conducted on June 9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. It will

showcase such recipes as Beef Tournedos with Mustard Sauce, Pan-roasted Rosemary Chicken with Basil Mashed Potatoes Pan Ajus, Roasted Pork with Applesauce, Crispy Salmon with Siciliana Sauce and Osso Buco Steak.

Maya Kitchen is at the 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City, tel. 8921185 or 8925011 local 108; e-mail mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph

Cupcakes galore

Dorothy's Cooking School will be offering cupcakes in different flavors, such as celadon green tea, tiramisu, red velvet in miniature, chocolate fudge surprise, lemon poppy seed and ham 'n' cheese with corn bits on June 2. For other baking, cooking and cake decorating schedules, call 721-7735, 416-7968.

The school is owned by cookbook author Dorothy Ferreria and is located in New Manila, Quezon City.



BEAT THE HEAT

Escape the heat wave—chill at Bo's Coffee with AntarTEAca. A Bo's Summer-Only Exclusive, this refreshing ice-blended tea comes in two flavors—Mango and Mixed Berries. So have a burst of frosty freshness with AntarTEAca at Bo's.



KAKANIN from Iloilo—suman latik, baye-baye and puto lanson

Dreaming of rice cakes

From page D1

with matamis na bao, coconut milk cooked with panocha until thick and almost solid.

The very first kakanin I cooked was *suman sa lihiya*. I was in Grade 4 at the St. Joseph's School in Olongapo City, an experience I've always been grateful for because I would not have learned *kakanin* cooking in a Manila school at the time.

I still remember how the *suman* turned green and I surmised it must have been because of the *lihiya* or lye water reacting with the banana leaves.

I thought that *suman* was the best *merienda* I ever had even compared to the *suman* my *lola* would bring home from Bataan.

In Leyte, my sister-in-law tried to teach me how to do *suman latik*, which is how *suman sa lihiya* is called there. The wrapper is the flame-shaped *hagikik* leaf. When the wrapping is done, the *suman* becomes triangular though the bottom is flat.

As in all food-wrapping exercises, I failed miserably so that rice grains slipped out while the *suman* was being steamed.

How *kakanin* is cooked looks fairly easy especially in businesses that do the process daily. When we visited the *putong* Pulo kitchen, we peeped into huge steamers that held so many pieces in small molds. And we watched how the first two of 13 *sapin-sapin* layers were done in Ka Nita Baluran's kitchen in Malolos.

Exacting

But when I had to document the *puto* and *sapin-sapin* recipes for *Kulinarya*, the working title of a Filipino recipe manual, I found the process even more exacting than baking a cake.

The recipes are from the family of chef Jessie Sincio who hails from Angat in Bulacan. We worked at her Le Souffle kitchen so, instead of the traditional kitchen, we were in a modern kitchen. In place of a stone grinder (*gilingan*), a blender was used to grind the soaked rice.

We found out in an earlier recipe test that a food processor would not do because the ground rice did not come out as fine.

Instead of the small round plastic containers for the *puto*, we experimented with a muffin pan. It worked but there had to be a cut plastic wrapper fitted into each container and brushed with oil.

It was Noreen, Jessie's niece, who worked with us. She said it was best to soak the rice overnight or at least five hours before grinding. There is also a time requirement for blending. Before or beyond that time will not give the desired result.

Even passing the ground rice through a cheesecloth requires a certain technique, rocking the mixture side to side instead of squeezing.

We followed the number of minutes needed for steaming. The length of time depends on how big the steamer is and how high the stove flame is. The most important information is, when cooking *puto*, never open the steamer before the *kakanin* is cooked. That rule means a crack at the top, the must-look of a well-cooked *puto*.

My deadline draws near for "Rice Cake Dreams" and I know that, beyond *suman* and *puto*, there are even more *kakanin-bibingka*, *kalamay*, *biko*, *espasol* and its Ilonggo cousin, *baye-baye*, *moche*, *moron*. The list goes on and on. It is really about time some of these are documented in a book.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

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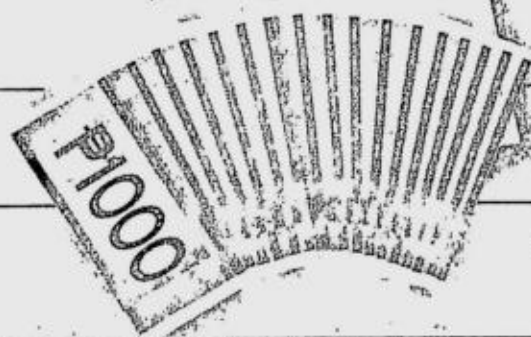
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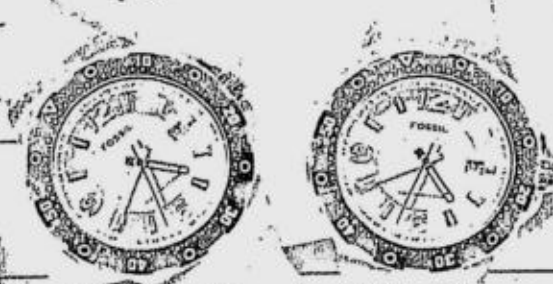
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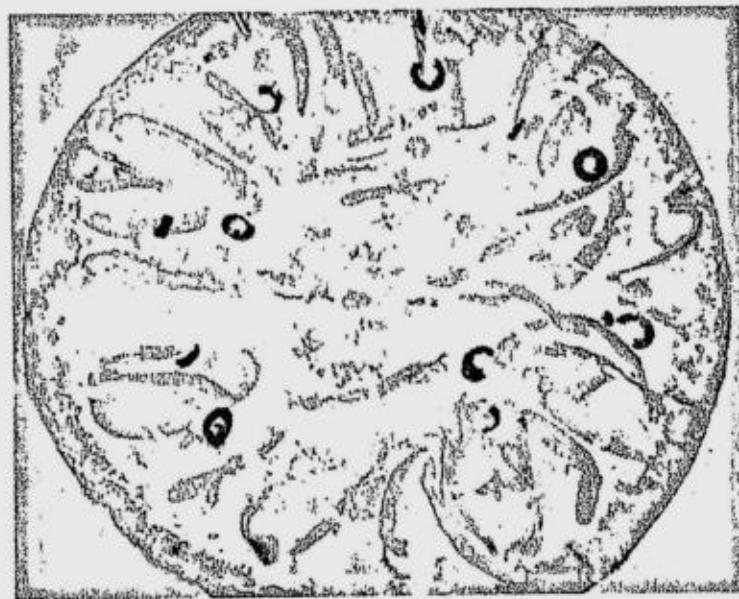
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Pizza Italianna is now at Hi-Top Supermarket, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City (tel. 9290124). It offers pizzas with freshly baked wheat crust and cheesy and unique toppings. Several flavors are available. Bestseller is Italianna Special, topped with fresh julienne cut tomatoes, green pepper and onions, sliced black olives and mushrooms, pineapple tidbits, baked ground beef, pepperoni and ham. Whole corn kernels are generously spread over a thick layer of cheese. Other favorites are Pepperoni Max, Meat Combo, Hawaiian, Pizza Italiano, Cheese Garlic and Pizza Dos.

Still at sea on maritime . . .

From page D4

They are also supposed to ensure that greed does not triumph over good sense and public welfare and safety. They cannot and should not just sit back as operators fill every empty space on a seacraft just because people are willing to take the risk with eyes wide open.

The Department of Tourism also has to take some initiative. True, domestic tourism is now the local governments' responsibility. But foreign tourists have to travel to their destination of choice and they have to take those overloaded seacraft and equally overloaded and dilapidated motor vehicles.

The DOT has to make sure visitors get to enjoy the sights they came here to see by working closely with the relevant agencies to ensure travel is safe for everyone.

How many more times do we have to read stories of boats and ships sinking because of overloading? Just because it happens all too often does not mean we should consider it already a fact of life.

This should not be a fact of life, people. This kind of negligence can kill.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascarido and Yague Sts., Makati City; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph.

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P2,850 - JUN 6 - Bake & decorate your own character birthday cake using star tips, simple borders & icing flowers.
P4,750 - JUN 7 - 8 - Wedding cake assembly: Bake & decorate your own 2 tiered wedding cake using fancy borders, scrolls, swirls & icing flowers.
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4. JUN 13 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT 2 KINDS - (P5,000)
Pina Colada, Tres Leches, Caramel Cake, Chocolate Cherry Cake
NEXT SCHED: JUL 13

5. JUN 15 // 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM - NEW CAKES - (P3,000)
NEXT SCHED: JUL 16 - 20

6. JUN 18 - 22 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - (P13,500. For whole course)
P2,750 - JUN 18 - Cakes: plain, mocha, choco, pound cake, sponge cake, moist choco cake.
P2,850 - JUN 19 - Cakes & Rolls: malacafiang roll, chocolate roll, brownies, pineapple upside-down, custard cake, lalisan.
P2,850 - JUN 20 - Breads: pan de sal, dinner rolls, buns, pan de coco, ensaymada, honey bread & raisin bread.
P2,950 - JUN 21 - Pies: Buko pie, custard pie, pineapple pie, apple pie, mango pie.
P2,850 - JUN 22 - Pastries & Cookies: cream puff, San Nicolas cookies, camachito, oatmeal cookies, lengua de galo, coconut macaroons.
NEXT SCHED: JUL 16 - 20

7. JUN 18 - 22 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH PORCELAIN RECIPE - (P5,000)
(Each set is lesson covered for one day) - a) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-waling; b) Rose, Cattleya, Cymbidium; c) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies; d) Open Rose, Hydrangeas, Grapes. *COLD PORCELAIN DOLLS (P11,000) by appointment* NEXT SCHED: JUL 16 - 20

8. JUN 25 - 29 // 8:00AM - 5:30PM - SPECIAL BAKING - (P14,000. For whole course)
Learn to make 25 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has a different icing & decoration.
P3,000 - JUN 25 - All Sponge Cakes: Nutsuko cake, Black Forest cake, Decadence cake, Fan Torta cake, Fruit Torta cake.
P3,000 - JUN 26 - All Chiffon Cakes: Mango cake, Ube cake, Pistachio cake, Rocky Road cake, Coffee Crunch cake.
P3,000 - JUN 27 - All Butter Cakes: Butter Rum cake, Carrot cake, Kahlua cake, Moist Chocolate cake, Special Fruit cake.
P3,000 - JUN 28 - Cheesecakes: Blueberry, Mango, Tiramisu, Cookies & Cream, New York Cheesecake.
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BURGER King is one of the strongest fast-food brands worldwide.

THE CONSUMER

Still at sea on maritime safety

By Linda B. Bolido

HOW MANY LIVES HAVE TO BE LOST before people, especially government authorities, take to heart lessons learned from previous sea tragedies? Why do we keep tempting fate by ignoring basic rules of safety?

I attended recently a reunion of my Masbate High School (now Masbate National Comprehensive High School) class. And while it was very heartening that some of our classmates were willing to go through a lot of difficulties just to attend, it was also perturbing to learn that they risked their lives in making the trip.

Lawyer Edilberto Lavadia wanted to catch at least the finale of the two-day event. His only chance to attend the farewell dinner was to travel from Bogo, Cebu, by an outrigger to the town of Placer in Masbate province then by jeepney to the capital city.

I have not been to Bogo but somebody said the trip from Cebu City to that seaport town was already quite a challenge.

From Bogo, Bert took a motorized banca with outriggers in what was probably the quintessential example of how cavalier we are about sea safety.

It was so full, he said, that people were sitting on the outriggers. It was not a short hop that people could playfully dangle their toes into the water as they cruised leisurely. This was a five-hour trip.

And this boat did like a jeepney. It picked up passengers along the way. They were transferred in the middle of the sea by smaller pumpboats.

This means the manifest left with authorities at the Bogo port was incomplete.

Fortunately the sea is calm this time of year.

When they finally got to Placer, Bert said, "We could not dock. The boat had to stop about a kilometer from shore and passengers were ferried by a smaller pumpboat."

Bert's trip by jeepney from Placer to the city was no picnic, either. Again every square inch of the jeepney inside and out had to be filled that he was practically squatting during the two-hour trip.

Filled to the aisles

Another classmate, a nurse based in Canada, found her trip to Masbate just as scary. The operator of the ferry that shuttles between Pilar, Sorsogon, and the city apparently does not want people to move around freely during the trip that they have filled the aisles with more seats.

Of course, that means more income, never mind if people are practically bound to their chairs the whole time they are at sea for lack of free space.

The nurse said some foreigners who were on the boat with her were horrified that authorities allowed such an arrangement. They would probably have jumped out of the boat if they knew we have had several deadly accidents because our boats and ships are overloaded.

She also recalled taking a ship from Manila via Romblon. It was more than full. People were sleeping on the floor for lack of beds.

Save them from their folly

Of course, people who insist on getting on a boat or ship that is filled beyond capacity should bear some responsibility if a tragedy occurs. They are not only risking their own lives but are literally dragging down others.

But the greater responsibility lies with government agencies, like the Philippine Coast Guard and Maritime Industry Authority (Marina), that are supposed to ensure safety and security for sea travel in the country.

Just because there are few boats and ships and too many passengers does not mean safety rules can be put on hold until the ratio improves.

Government authorities are supposed to save people from their own folly, keep them from making decisions that will put them at risk like insisting on getting on a ship or boat that is filled beyond capacity.

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LIFESTYLE

Gastronomy
on TVText by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Romy Homillada

MYRNA SEGISMUNDO WAS catering a party in the house of Gabby Lopez when the CEO and chairman of ABS-CBN broached the idea of a culinary television show.

"I was checking the food when he came into the kitchen," says Segismundo, director of Restaurant 9501, the corporate dining outlet of ABS-CBN. "He said he had wanted to come up with a locally produced cooking show that would match the Lifestyle Network's canned shows."

Despite her years of experience and expertise in the culinary field, having served as officer of the Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Philippines and manager of a group of chefs who competed in competitions both here and abroad, Segismundo thought her exposure to the Lifestyle Network's demanding and savvy viewership would be a tough challenge.

"I was surprised by his offer and, at the same time, afraid. Of course, I was flattered, too, when I got my bearings back later. Since this is my first venture into TV production, it took more than a year to conceptualize the show," she says.

The show is "Chef TV: The Food Show," slated for initial telecast yesterday on the Lifestyle Network. It will air every Wednesday at 6 p.m., with replays on Saturdays, 4:30 p.m. Its hosts are Segismundo, who also acts as the show's producer; INQUIRER food columnist Michaela "Micky" Fenix, who also serves as scriptwriter; and chef Jill Sandique. Bong Agustin directs the 13-episode TV special.

"The program is not just a cooking show but also explores the many aspects of the food industry," says Fenix, who also edits cookbooks and researches on regional as well as foreign cuisines. She provides the historical and cultural notes on the cooking, ingredients used and practices.

"Food is really connected to culture, which many people don't know. In the show, we'll always have something Filipino because our thrust is to promote Filipino cuisine, cooks, products and ingredients. But from the very start, we have been doing that—Myrna in her cooking, me with my writing and research," Fenix says.

Sandique, on the other hand, conducts most of the show's cooking basics, which also showcase her vast knowledge of cooking chemistry. She is a chef consultant to food companies, program director and lead trainer of the US Demonstration Kitchen and Learning Facility of the US Department of Agriculture in the Philippines. She also owns the pastry shop Delize.

Segismundo conducts the interviews and information segments and heats up the kitchen with her creative signature dishes.

Good team

The rapport of the three gourmets is largely due to their camaraderie, common passion for fine food and appetite for life.

"We make a pretty good team. There are no egos yet; *mga kusinera lang naman tayo*. But what's important is, we're friends. I've known Micky for a very long time while Jill is a new friend but fast catching up. It's surprising to discover we have the same taste in clothes and that we both collect chickens," says Segismundo.

Since "Chef TV: The Food Show" bubbles over with piquant humor and saucy kitchen adventures, Sandique finds taping for the show "fun. It's not work. We really don't feel like we're on camera."

"Our main objective is to be comfortable with each other and make our guests comfortable with us, too, since working in front of the camera can be quite unnerving. But since we are friends, we forget that we are really acting," Segismundo adds.

The three women hope "Chef TV's" 13 episodes would ultimately entice more susceptible taste buds to try cooking and be more adventurous with food.

"Food should be delicious and accessible," says Fenix. "We just think that preparing food or throwing parties should not be a grand mystery or overly fussy. To that end, we will divulge some of the secrets of those involved in the food industry and seasoned caterers so viewers can pull off their own events with the least amount of stress."

"It's going to be a mix of cooking and entertaining tips," adds Sandique, explaining how each episode focuses on a different theme, such as a picnic, formal dining, big feasts, wine basics, apartment entertaining, classic cuisine, cooking as sport and putting the Filipino menu on the map.

"The show has opened my eyes to a whole new dimension of food. This is a very exciting medium for me, having been behind the stove for so many years. It's challenging and difficult yet fun," says Segismundo.

"Chef TV: The Food Show" is, indeed, a must-see for those in search of gastronomic epiphanies.

This food show is a must-see for those in search of culinary epiphanies



MICHAELA "Micky" Fenix



MYRNA Segismundo



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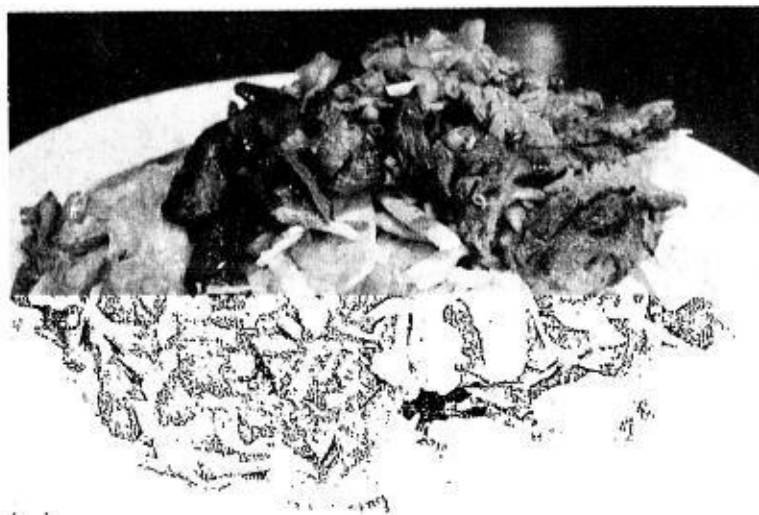
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FAJITA Beef Salad



THE GREAT Ribeye

Where 'cowboys' can steak 'em up

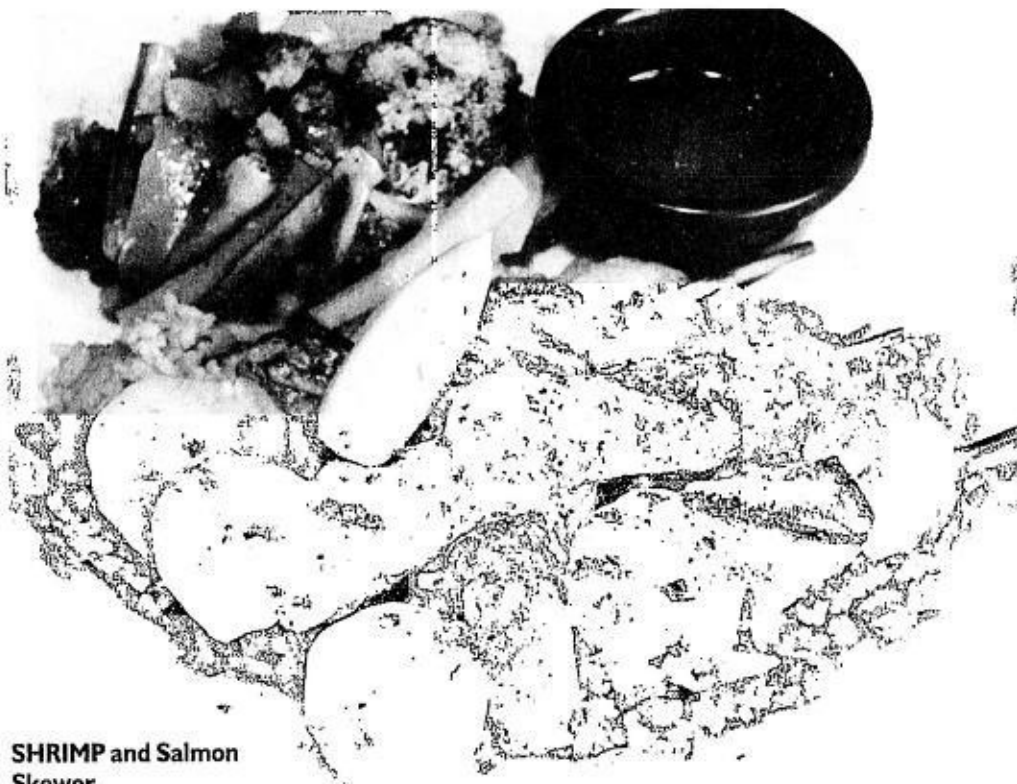
Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Ryan Lim

A THEME RESTAURANT AT The Fort in Taguig creates a scene straight out of cowboy movies with wagon wheels, swinging saloon doors, country music and service crew in cowboy hats.

Texas Roadhouse Grill gives Filipinos a glimpse of the American south and a taste of its cooking. It also offers authentic American grilled food, the hallmark of this international concept restaurant.

Opened about two months ago, Texas Roadhouse serves, as to be expected, grilled steaks. But its menu is much more varied as it includes, among others, seafood, chicken and what-have-you.

"It's a place where you can have your



SHRIMP and Salmon Skewer

seafood, chicken and steaks cooked and grilled the way you want them," says Macoy Gabriel, food and beverage manager. "Our concept is much like a Western cowboy saloon, combining good food, good ambience and real fun at the end of the day."

The restaurant is owned by nine low-profile American and Filipino businessmen.

About 80 percent of the ingredients it uses are imported, including the meat that is directly flown in from the United States, thanks to one partner who is in the import business.

"That's why our meats are much cheaper than other restaurants," adds Elaine de Jesus, marketing head.

Ribeye at Texas Roadhouse costs P800 while tenderloin is P495.

Seafood comes from Vietnam, China and Australia. Mussels are from New Zealand.

Texas Roadhouse clients on weekdays are mainly young, office types. On weekends it is filled with families and *barkada*.

The restaurant can seat about 140 people, including those who want to dine al fresco. It has a function room that can accommodate 30 people.

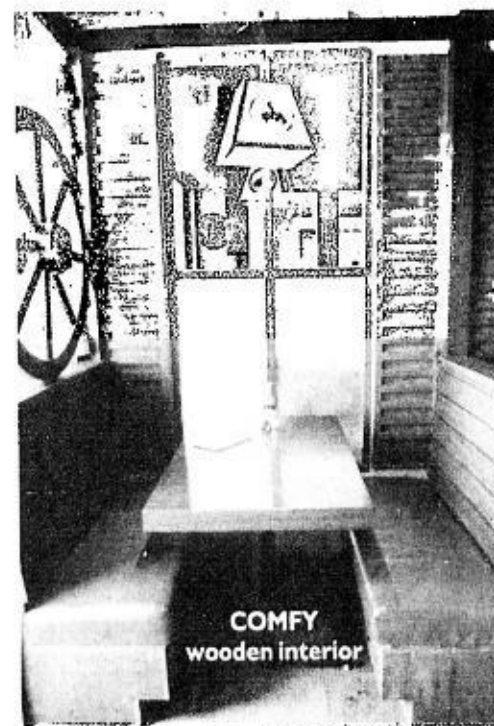
Furnished with comfortable wooden tables and chairs, the restaurant also has some booths to allow some privacy.

The bar has an extensive selection of wines and liquors. A television set lets patrons watch their favorite sports programs.

The open kitchen gives diners a peek at how *fajitas*, fish fillet and chili tacos, among others, are prepared.

"We wanted to be an American version of Dencio's or Gerry's (Filipino grill places). It's

Texas Roadhouse is an American grill restaurant that also specializes in every food you can imagine



an American grill house specializing in every food you can imagine," says de Jesus.

Sizzling selection

For starters, you may try Crispy Calamari, Buffalo Wings, New Zealand Baked Mussels, Santa Fe Nachos.

But you should not miss the Beef and Mushroom Skillet, served sizzling with caramelized onions and bell peppers.

Their Fajita Beef Salad is a cut above the rest with grilled steak strips rubbed with five spices and served over a bed of mixed greens, tossed with mandarin oranges, wasabi-flavored tortilla strips and sesame-ginger dressing.

For the main course, you cannot go wrong with Shrimp and Salmon Skewer, three skewers of juicy shrimp and salmon steak grilled and seasoned with Roadhouse herbs and spices.

Or you can sink your teeth into The Great Ribeye, the most popular on the steak list. The 10-ounce US steak is seasoned with herbs and garlic. You can also ask for Trailboss Herb Steak, a US Top Blade steak rubbed with roasted herb jus.

As you like it

All steaks are prepared according to your preference. Rare means the meat still has a cool red center. Medium rare has a warm red center and very juicy. Medium has pink center; medium well, slight pink center. Well done is cooked through and through.

But Gabriel says if the meat is good, there is no need to have it well done.

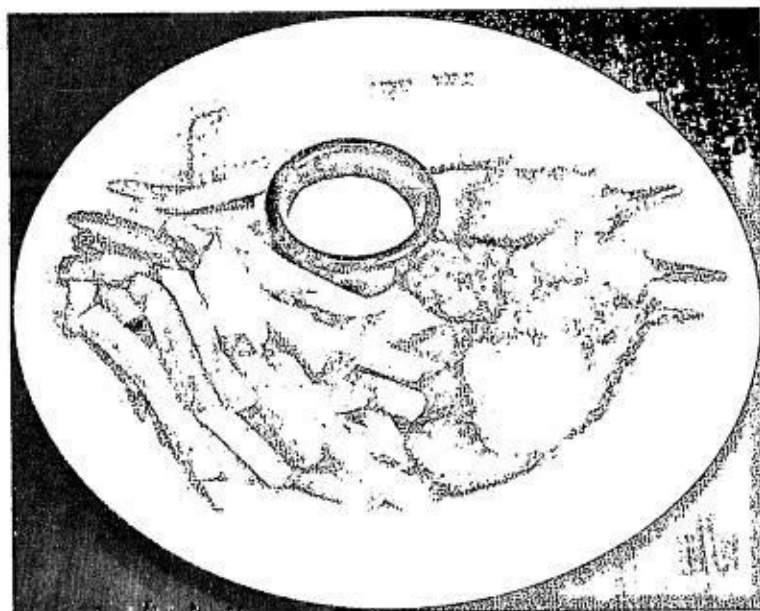
If you prefer grilled ribs and chops, try the Wrangler's Pork Steak and Baby Back Ribs.

Though steak is the star attraction at Texas Roadhouse, you need not go hungry if you are avoiding red meat.

Check out Ma Baker's Chicken Platter, grilled chicken breast with Texas rice, sweet corn on the cob and fresh veggies; Wyatt Earp's Shrimp Crispers, fresh shrimps breaded and golden fried; and Sheriff's Fish and Chips make the dining experience extra special.

Remember to leave room for dessert like the Mighty Oreo Mud Pie, coffee ice cream with Snickers candy pieces in rich chocolate ice cream on a crushed Oreo cookie crust, and drizzled with chocolate sauce; Apple Cobbler, topped with vanilla ice cream sprinkled with caramel and a hint of cinnamon; or the Chuckwagon's Fruits in Cream that has ripe bananas and juicy mango chunks topped with vanilla ice cream, hot fudge, chopped walnuts and whipped cream.

Texas Roadhouse Grill is at Quadrant 1, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City. Call 8561547. The second outlet will soon open in Ortigas Center, Pasig City.



WYATT Earp's Shrimp Crispers



APPLE Cobbler

DINING OUT

Singaporean buffet

CRUSTASIA HAS OPENED ITS NEW BRANCH IN Trinoma Mall, North Triangle, QC. The restaurant offers Vietnamese, Thai and authentic Singaporean dishes. New dishes include Peranakan Chicken Curry, Thai Fish Pancake, Beef Rendang, Buttered Oatmeal Prawns, Char Tow Kueh, Claypot Chicken Rice, Cold Shanghai Tofu, Fish Head Curry Soup, Hae Mee, Hokkien Fried Noodle, Thai Fish Pancake, Pomelo Salad, Thai Stuffed Eggplant, Thai Vegetable and Mixed Sambal Seafood. Crustasia has the Grand Singaporean Seafood Buffet scheduled 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Friday-Sunday, and 6-9 p.m. at The Podium. Call 7285463, 6313857 and 9013607.

HYATT Hotel and Casino's Market Café presents "Singapore Delights!" Singapore specialties like Hainanese Chicken, Chili Crab, Char Kway Teow (fried flat noodles), Roti Prata (pancake) and Laksa (spicy noodle soup) will be offered. Call 2451234.

GERRY'S GRILL has opened a new branch in Trinoma Mall, QC. The new branch is designed not just for dining but also for winding down with friends after work. It offers the same menu and quality as other branches at reasonable rates to fit any budget. Among Gerry's Grill specialties

are *sisig*, beef *kare-kare*, *bulalo*, *crispy pata*, grilled squid and *lechon kawali*. Other favorites are Veggie Rice, Sugba Kilaw, Tahong à la Pobre, Adobong Puso Rice, Bagoong Rice and Crab Rice.

THE METCAFÉ by Ilustrado features a bamboo menu for the ongoing Metropolitan Museum of Manila's bamboo exhibit "Lawiswis: Mga Kwentong ng Buhay Mula sa Kawayan." The bamboo dishes will be available until July 6, last day of the exhibition. Metcafé's healthy bamboo dishes include salad of *labong*, carrots, sweet potato and jicama in coco cream vinaigrette; fresh *lumpiang labong*; chicken *binakol*; *binumbong na adobo* with rice, tomatoes and salted egg; and grilled prawns with coco sauce in bamboo shoots. Metcafé is at 1/F, Metropolitan Museum of Manila lobby, inside Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard. Call 5211517 or visit www.metmuseum.ph.

KITARO, Japanese casual dining restaurant offers Hot and Cold Samplers, new exciting double treats from 2-5 p.m. at any of Kitaro's 50 branches. The Samplers include Kani-salad-California Maki, P89; Kani Salad-Tuna Sushi, P79; Yakisoba-Fried Tofu, P59; Yakisoba-Sakana Furai, P59;



CRUSTASIA Peranakan Chicken Curry

Yakisoba-Haru Maki, P79; Yakisoba-Taro Shitake, P99. Also new in the menu are Maguro Tataki—seared tuna with special dressing, P215; Unagi Boh—chopped unagi tamago, cucumber and shredded *kani* rolled in *nori*, P189 for five pieces and P89 for two pieces. Desserts include Green Tea Panna Cotta, P48; Chocolate Cake, P62; Butter Rum Cake, P62; and Mango Panna Cotta, P48. Call 9111115 for delivery.



GOURMET BROWNIE
Café Xocolat, Catalan for chocolate, offers the gourmet Brownie à la Mode, four square inches of richness capped with vanilla ice cream and covered with a net of choco syrup and caramel. Café Xocolat's branch is at Citywalk 2, Eastwood City, Libis, QC. Call 6873209 or 0917-8EWICITY.

Is Fastfood **JUNK** Food?



If you're a fastfood chain owner,
it's your duty to provide the right nutrition facts.

Treat your customer right. If you're a responsible fastfood chain owner, you should provide the true fat, calorie, carbohydrate, protein, sodium and cholesterol content in all the foods you offer.

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A Message of Concern from

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Website: www.qualibetlab.com

Not so fast on those fast-food chains

By Joel V. Nigos

In today's urban setting, time is of foremost importance. Beating work deadlines, meetings and other commitments almost always grab the most part of our everyday life.

With less time to spare and in our desire to finish all those daunting tasks, we most often compromise on the food we eat. We take those that are fast and

readily available thereby ignoring our diet and failing to see what stuff they are made of.

Such is the case of Rod Nepomuceno, managing director of Crush Communications Inc., an advertising agency which is an affiliate of The Next Big Thing Ltd. in Singapore.

A lawyer by education, Nepomuceno shares that his job as head of this fast-growing agency often exposes him to a lot of work and a back-breaking schedule. Since the firm is also involved in public relations, events management, and digital or online media, he knows that he's up to more responsibilities ahead. And with a hectic schedule notwithstanding, he maintains that he's still very much keen on the food he eats.

"During weekdays, I limit myself to fish, lean meat, chicken and a lot of salad. I usually eat only oat meals for breakfast, no fried hotdog or any meat. My wife and I also have made a commitment to only take brown rice and just one bowl per meal. I only get indulged on weekends but keeping in mind that I

should be moderate on my eating," he shares.

Though already mindful of his food intake, skipping meals or taking a fast one sometimes happen especially when he's immersed in a lot of work, he says. And there were times, he admits, that he needs to eat in a fast-food restaurant just to get by.

"I would occasionally go to a fast-food chain but at least to those which have a reputation of cleanliness and of serving only quality food. You have to be really careful nowadays because you can also get diseases from the food you eat."

Thus, and also for health-conscious people like him, knowing the ingredients of the food served in fast-food restaurants is a big help. As paying customers, he believes he has the right to know. Nutrition facts on every food on the menu should be provided by fast-food chains. Something maybe he's learning from his company which is beginning to get exposed to the promotion and advertising of health-related companies and products.

Enormous benefits

Nepomuceno, who was once a country manager of IMG Philippines, believes that being more responsible and transparent would bring enormous benefits to their customers and to the fast-food chains as well. (IMG or the International Management Group is the largest sports marketing company in the world. It owns the rights for Wimbledon and several golf tournaments in the US and manages Pete Sampras, Tiger Woods, Andre Agassi, among others.)

"For the consumers, they don't have to always think what they're eating is right since the nutrition facts are there. Though the decision to eat is entirely on the consumers, at least they are informed."

For the fast-food chains, the long-term gains are also huge, stresses Nepomuceno. "They reassure their customers that they only serve quality food and the commitment to clients to provide only the best products is also reaffirmed."

"It projects a caring attitude. It also pushes the restaurants to exert more effort to improve the quality and put more healthy ingredients on their food," he explains.

For her part, Pinky Tobiano, founder and president of Qualibet Testing Services Inc., echoes that "it's the duty of

fast-food restaurants to provide their customers the nutrition facts of the food they served."

"We should know the fats, calories, proteins, carbohydrates, even the MSG and sugar content of the food we eat," she says.

She adds that providing this vital information "would not only make their customers informed but would also help promote a better and safer life as people now would have a choice of shying away from food with certain ingredients which they should not take especially if they are afflicted with certain diseases."

Tobiano is a cancer survivor who has made it her personal advocacy to ensure food safety for all and not just for a privileged few. She's a BS Chemistry graduate from UST and prior to establishing Qualibet, she took the "Owners President Management Course" at Harvard from 2000-2003.

She explains though that it is not entirely correct to say that food served in fast-food restaurants are not for those health-conscious people or those who have strict diet to follow because she says "they can be healthy foods."

She adds that she wants to prove a point that it is safe to eat in fast-food chains (even for those who have diseases) as long as they are responsible fast-food chains.

Inevitable

Nepomuceno believes that nutrition information being provided on every food we eat on fast-food chains is inevitable.

He observes that people now are more conscious on the food they take. He drew parallels on the beverage industry in which those drinks which have health benefits are the ones which now sell.

He explains that inevitably the "market would demand it or would dictate it."

"I think it's beginning to happen. A certain fast-food chain, in their paper mats, indicates the sources of their ingredients. Another provides some information on some of their food," he shares.

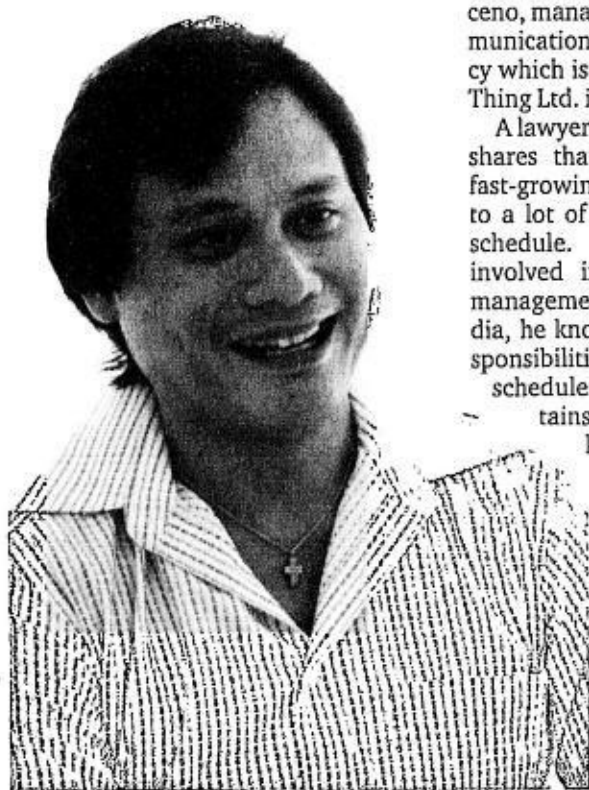
But transparency should not be self-serving, he shares. "A third party should validate their claim."

"The audit of the nutritional content

should not be an in-house audit but should come from an independent party to make it more credible," echoes Tobiano.

Qualibet offers third-party testing services for food served in fast-food chains. The firm is a food, water, pharmaceutical and veterinary testing facility. A member of the American Chemical Society and American Association of Analytical Chemists, the company is also the newest and has the most modern testing facility in the Philippines managed by US-trained chemists, pharmacists, microbiologists and pathologists.

"In the long run, and more than their customers, it would be the fast-food chains which would benefit," notes Tobiano. "Because once these consumers are reassured, more and more people would eventually patronize their restaurants," she concludes.



Nepomuceno, Crush Communications' managing director



NEPOMUCENO with his staff at Crush Communications, an advertising agency which is beginning to get exposed to the promotion and advertising of health-related companies and health products.



Pinky Tobiano, founder and president of Qualibet Testing Services Inc. along with Nepomuceno



SALMON flavored with fresh coriander duck liver flan



VIANNEY Fabre, Bollinger area manager

A champagne dinner

By Michaela Fenix



TITA Meneses Trillo of Titania Wines

CHAMPAGNE ALWAYS CONnotes celebration and fun. And that's what came to mind when Tita Meneses Trillo issued an invitation to a Bollinger dinner at the Prince Albert Rotisserie of The InterContinental Manila.

Bollinger is one of the famous champagne houses. It is nicknamed Bolly in England, its biggest market and where it is the official champagne in many royal events.

But to business first before pleasure. Vianney Fabre, area manager of the Bollinger House, gave an introduction to the vineyards and the products—the Special Cuvée, the higher-end La Grande Année, cham-

pagne mixed with red wine called Le Grande Année Rosé, and the R.D., short for "recently disgorged" which is Grande Année slowly matured for up to 25 years.

We were also introduced to the Bollinger family. It is a curious fact that many of the French wine houses always have women as their most effective promoters.

Lilly Bollinger managed the business until 1971 when her nephews took over. Her most famous lines: "I drink it when I'm happy and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I'm not hungry and drink it when I am. Otherwise, I never touch it—unless I'm thirsty."

Quality

How can one not be thirsty for a product that insists on quality? From strictly using only the first pressing of its grapes to fermenting

in oak barrels and aging even beyond the requirements of the Appellation Controlee, the ruling body of the French wine industry.

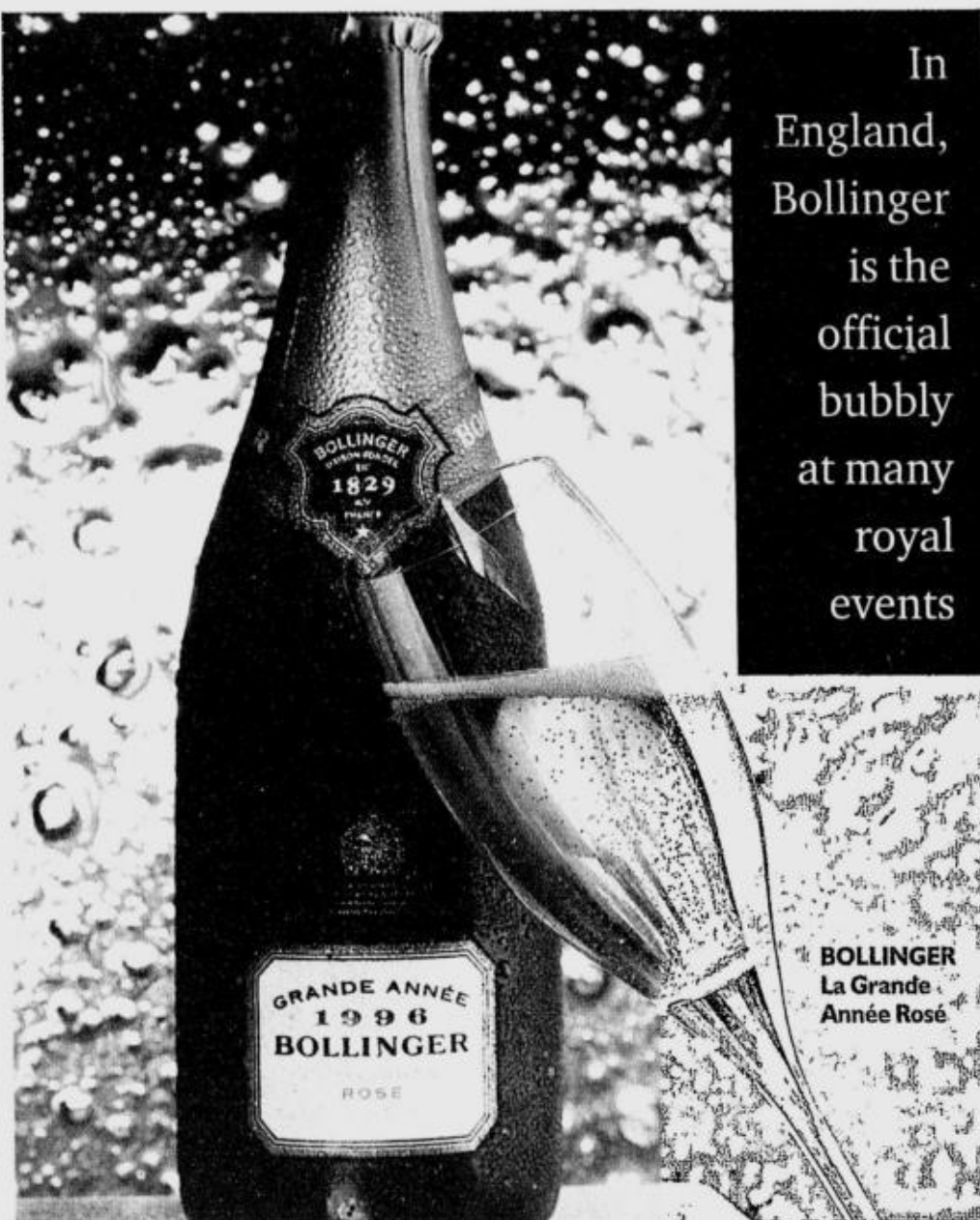
The pleasure part was the dinner that began with a carpaccio of Angus beef followed by a soup of scallops and sea urchin. For our main course, we were asked to choose either beef tenderloin with warm duck liver or a salmon flavored with fresh coriander duck liver flan.

Dessert was a thick rich warm dark choco-

late volcano with vanilla bourbon ice cream.

We sampled the Special Cuvée, mostly of pinot noir grapes. Mixed into its composition are reserve wines that have been kept in magnums stopped with cork to maintain the consistency.

And consistency is what Bollinger is proud of, from the way grapes are grown to how they are harvested to the process of maturing, including turning the bottles at appointed times.



In England, Bollinger is the official bubbly at many royal events

BOLLINGER La Grande Année Rosé

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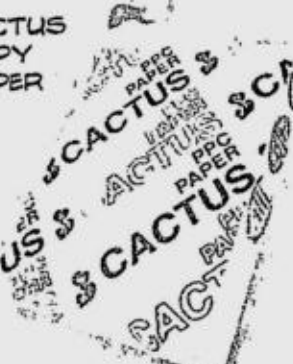
SEAGULL SPIRAL MINI NOTEBOOK



CATTLEA SPIRAL NOTEBOOK



CACTUS COPY PAPER



POST-IT FLAG BALLPEN



National Book Store



SLEEK coffee packaging

ATTRACTIVE yellow boxes for buco pie and espasol



New package designs for Pinoy food products

LOCAL COMPANIES UNVEILED new packaging designs at the recent International Food Exhibition Philippines (Ifex) aimed at making them more competitive in the global food market.

Ifex was organized by the Department of Trade and Industry's export promotion arm, the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions.

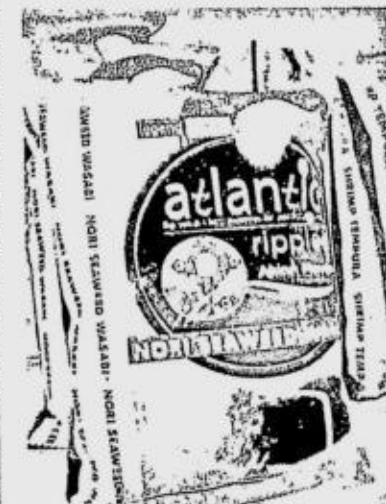
Buco pie and espasol were put in yellow boxes with attractive typefaces. Lambanog was in a sleek white bottle.

Wasabi-flavored potato chips

was part of local manufacturers' efforts not only to use hip, trendy colors but also to try unique flavors to attract young consumers.

An essential element in food packaging was the word "healthy" that suggested specific health, environmental values promoted by certain products.

Ifex showed that local food companies were not just coming out with better products, but were also out improving their package designs for the highly competitive international market.



HIP COLORS for snacks with new flavors



LAMBANOG in classy bottles

LIFESTYLE

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inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Do you have a handy-daddy?

IS YOUR DAD A DO-IT-YOURSELF kind of guy? Does leisure time mean tool time to him? Is he a sucker for home improvement projects? Is he in his elements when he has something to fix around the house?

When you go out shopping, does he head straight for the hardware store?

In 500 words or less, tell us about your handy-daddy and his latest or best DIY project. Send us a photo of him with his very

own creation—a chair, a bookcase, a trellis, any furniture or home accessory that he made himself.

Entries with no photos will automatically be disqualified.

INQUIRER Lifestyle will pick the best four handy-daddies from our readers' entries and will take them shopping at Handyman where they each will receive P20,000 worth of purchases courtesy of Handyman,

plus a Samsung S500 digital camera courtesy of Robinsons Appliances.

Include your name and age, your dad's name and age, your address, telephone number(s)

and mobile phone number(s).

Submit your entry to Philippine Daily Inquirer, 1098 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati, attention Lifestyle. Or e-mail to dad@inquirer.com.ph. Deadline for entries is June 8.



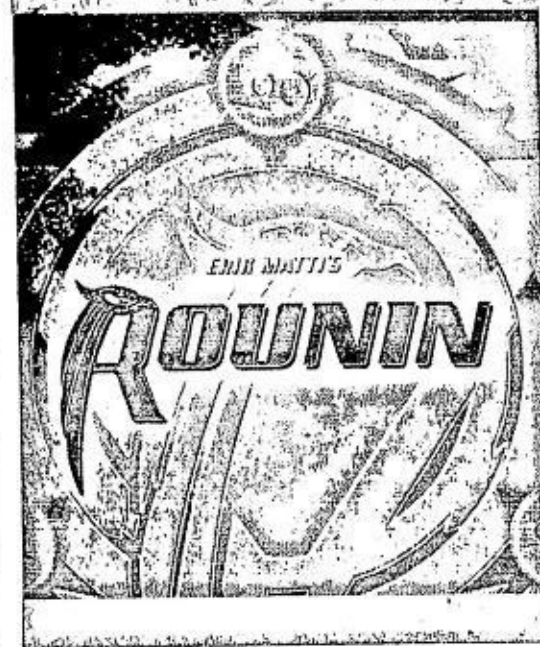
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- Get special rates from these participating hotels: Hotel InterContinental Manila (815-9711), The Peninsula Manila (810-3456), Renaissance Makati City Hotel (811-6888), Makati Shangri-La (813-8888), Dusit Hotel Nikko (867-3333), Mandarin Oriental Manila (750-8888), and Ascott Makati (729-8888).

glorietta

GREENBELT

GARFIELD



A. LIPIN



BABY BLUES



PUGAD BABOY



MUTTS



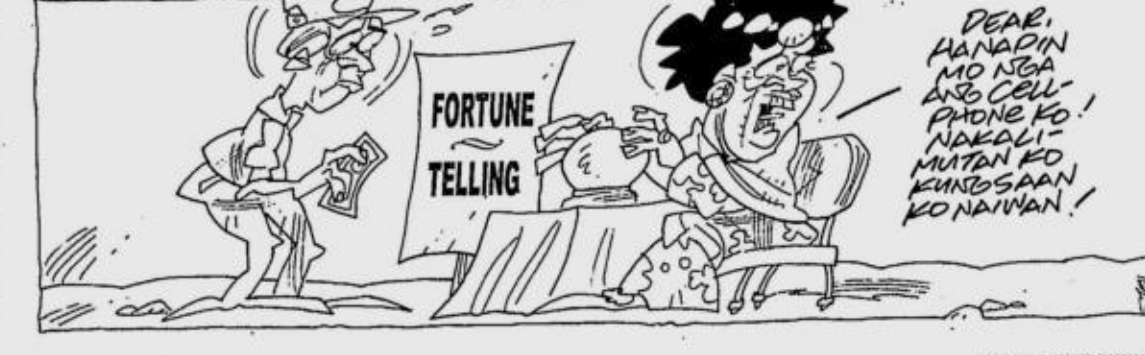
LOVEKNOTS



ATOMO AND WEBOY



DIVINE COMEDY



KIKO MACHINE



MIKROKOSMOS



TULDOK



BEN



DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Twinned crystal
- One soprano
- GP's org.
- Playwright
- Fugard
- Got up
- Jewel
- Start of Booker T. Washington quote
- Fish eggs
- Large merchant ship
- Part 2 of quote
- H.S. student
- Dadaist Max
- Board game from India
- Artist's undercoat
- Containing gold
- Granges
- Atlas page
- Player's bio entry
- Part 3 of quote
- Taunt
- Male offspring
- General assemblies
- Strong cotton thread
- Hillock
- Show place
- George who was Mary
- Future atty.'s exam
- Part 4 of quote
- Retaliatory action
- John or Jane?
- End of quote
- Not Unusual
- Dwelling place
- The easiest of puns
- Snaky shape
- Standish of Plymouth Colony
- Textile lubricant

DOWN

- Poet Angelou
- Idol follower?
- Drink in one gulp
- Bonkers
- Flexible
- CO clock setting
- "Frome"
- Type of lens
- "Nana" writer
- Peculiarity
- Expert in soil management
- Cat's calls
- Catkin
- Louis and Carrie
- AMA members
- Paris tower
- While away
- Pilot or mobile starter
- Grouch's trait
- Smack
- Cracked buckwheat
- Ostrich's cousin
- Writer Rand
- Competent
- Equal
- Not up to snuff
- Actress Scala
- City near Berlin
- Enough already!
- Ready or ...
- Mata
- Fisher or Cantor
- Plunders
- Comic Paul
- Shakespeare's Belch
- MP's quarry
- Singer Collins
- Alas!
- California valley
- Feds
- Unself of basketball

By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
5/31/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a direct, no-nonsense approach to life. This style, combined with your capable talent, easily earns the respect of others. You hide your feelings behind a mask. You have strong opinions and don't hesitate to voice them. You always appear self-assured, regardless of how you feel inside. Your year ahead will be full of new, fresh beginnings. Open any door!

BIRTHDATE: Clint Eastwood, actor/director; Brooke Shields, actress; Colin Farrell, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Take extra precautions because today's Full Moon is slightly accident-prone for your sign. Slow down. Don't rush anything. Double-check everything you do.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today's Full Moon could create some financial tension for you. Stay on top of your money scene. If you're not sure what to do about shared possessions, do nothing (at least for today).

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The Full Moon today opposes your sign, and this can give you the feeling that others are opposing you as well. Actually, this might be the case. Go slowly; be patient.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be extra patient with co-workers, customers and clients today. Today's Full Moon makes people irritable and impatient. (You need this like a fish needs a bicycle.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): It's hard to know where to direct your energies today. Romantic interests or the responsibilities of children could conflict with those of groups and friends.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Today you feel the classic tug-of-war between the demands of home and family versus the demands of career and your external world. Just cope as best you can.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Avoid religious, political and philosophical arguments with others today. Today's Full Moon also can aggravate racial tension. Just be cool.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): If you are unsure about financial matters or the responsibilities you have for others, wait until you get more information. Something seems to be coming to a head here.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today's Full Moon is in your sign. This is the only time all year this will occur. It makes it difficult to know whose interests to put first—your own or those of others?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't worry about some underlying tension that you might feel. Today is the Full Moon. It makes everyone feel a bit more emotional and on edge. (The feeling is gone in 24 hours.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Avoid disputes with friends and groups today. This is simply the energy of the Full Moon today. Table these discussions until another day. No big deal.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): It might be a bit difficult dealing with authority figures, bosses and parents today. That's because today's Full Moon introduces increased tension in these areas.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

		7				4	5	
2				8				
6				4				3
			6		1			
	8	6				9	7	
			8		5			
1				3				4
				6				2
	4	9				8		

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

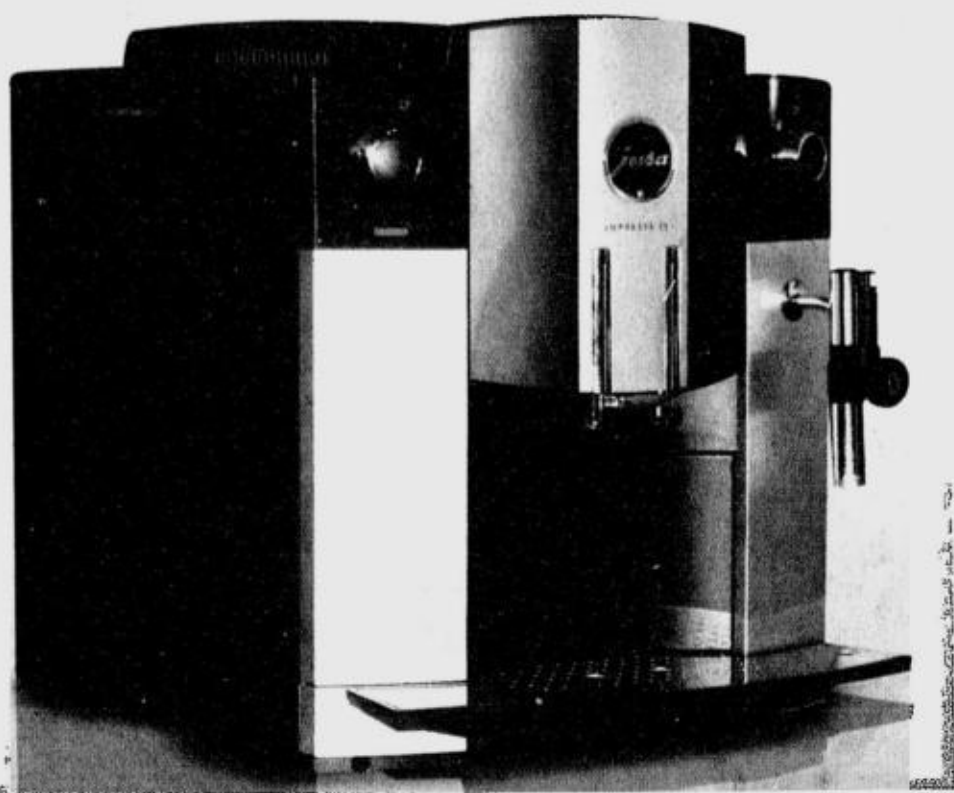
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

3	9	4	1	2	6	8	7	5
8	5	6	3	9	7	1	2	4
2	7	1	5	4	8	9	3	6
7	1	2	9	6	5	4	8	3
4	8	3	2	7	1	5	6	9
5	6	9	8	3	4	2	1	7
1	2	7	6	5	9	3	4	8
6	3	5	4	8	2	7	9	1
9	4	8	7	1	3	6	5	2

Difficulty Level ★★



THE JURA fully automatic coffee machines are intelligent, efficient and easy to operate.

Cold storage is not cool for your coffee

By Linda B. Bolido

THEY MAY HAVE THE SAME color—and may even seem to smell the same, but Michael Harris Lim says not all coffees are alike.

The differences may be more subtle than in wine but, like wine, planting varieties, soil, climate, etc. all affect the coffee that is eventually produced.

As president of Conlins Coffee Company, the youthful Lim has made it his business to know coffee. He evaluates them in terms of body, acidity and balance.

Lim says African coffees are generally fruitier, their taste carrying hints of citrus and berries.

Asian varieties, on the other hand, are more robust, earthier.

And, like wine, how well coffee retains its flavor and aroma is all in the way it is stored.

If you are one of those people who have been led to believe the best way to preserve coffee's taste and aroma is to store it in the refrigerator, particularly the freezer, you better get it out of there fast.

"A refrigerator dries up the moisture and coffee will absorb other odors," Lim says. That means your coffee will get the smell of the fish, meat, chicken and everything else you put in your ref.

Beans have to release their gases and age naturally. Refrigerator storage alters the natural aging of the coffee and changes the chemistry of the bean. As flavor oils in roasted coffee are "delicate and water soluble," moisture that develops in the refrigerator can alter the beans' taste.

Airtight storage

Lim, whose company is the exclusive distributor of Bluenotes premium coffee, adds that air moisture and light will all affect the quality of coffee. The best way to keep coffee at premium quality is to store it in an airtight container at room temperature.

Lim says, though it may seem obvious, ground coffee should never be reused—at least not to brew another pot. You can use it as organic fertilizer for certain garden plants that seem to thrive in an occasional dose of caffeine.

And making decaffeinated coffee is not as easy as adding more water to your brew, Lim says. It is a procedure that can only be done in a coffee processing factory either by introduc-

ing some chemicals to the ground beans or squeezing out the caffeine from them.

Flavoring also has to be added after you have brewed your coffee.

Different varieties, Lim says, also require different roasting processes to bring out their distinctive flavors.

Dark roast, which means the coffee is well done, results in a brew with less caffeine and acid. Light roasting, on the other hand, makes the coffee more acidic because the beans are not fully cooked.

Gourmet coffees are made from two main types—robusta, which is responsible for the caffeine content, and Arabica, which gives the brew its aroma.

Bluenotes coffees, currently available at Sofitel Philippine Plaza and Conlins Lifestyle Cafes (one has just opened at the SM Mall of Asia), are made from the best varieties of Arabica beans. The line includes Columbia, Sumatra, Timor, Brazil, Kenya, Guatemala, Honduras, Malawi, Nicaragua



PLANTING varieties, soil, climate, etc. all affect coffee quality.

and Jamaica Blue Mountain. At the moment, Conlins does not carry the Arabica variety from northern Philippines like Mountain Province and Benguet.

Although he found Baguio Arabica, for instance, "very good with subtle tones," Lim says production is still not in the quantities Conlins would need for its Bluenotes line.

Conlins seeks to complete the coffee experience for true lovers of good brews by offering the Swiss-made Jura Impressa coffee makers.

The elegant though rather pricey machines are supposed to make brews as good as, if not better, than those available in well-known coffee chains.

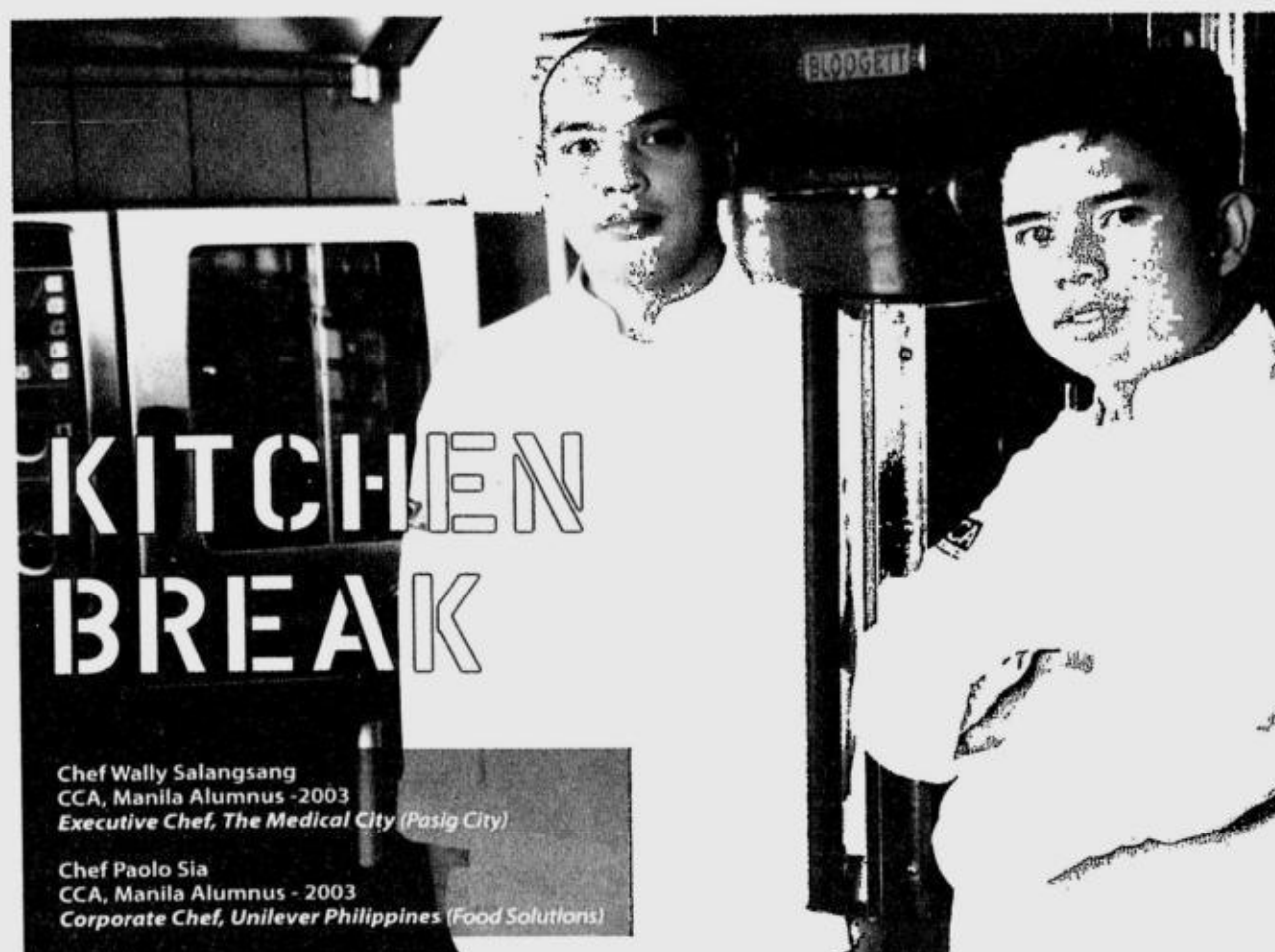
Lim says with one of these machines at home, you can organize coffee parties or have your coffee meetings with friends and associates at home instead of in a cafe.

Brewing basics

Lim offers the following guidelines for making good coffee:

1. Grind only as much as you need (if you are using whole beans) for brewing.
2. Use 2.5 tablespoons of fresh ground beans for every eight ounces of water, depending on your preference.
3. Brewed coffee should be consumed at once as it will retain its optimal freshness for only 20-30 minutes.
4. Continuous heating will cause organic materials in coffee to break apart leading to a sour, bitter taste with smokey overtones.

Refrigeration alters the natural aging of the bean and changes its chemistry



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CCA, Manila Alumnus - 2003
Executive Chef, The Medical City (Pasig City)

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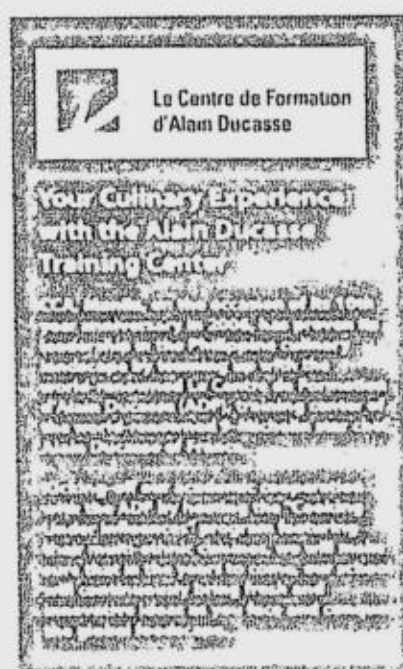
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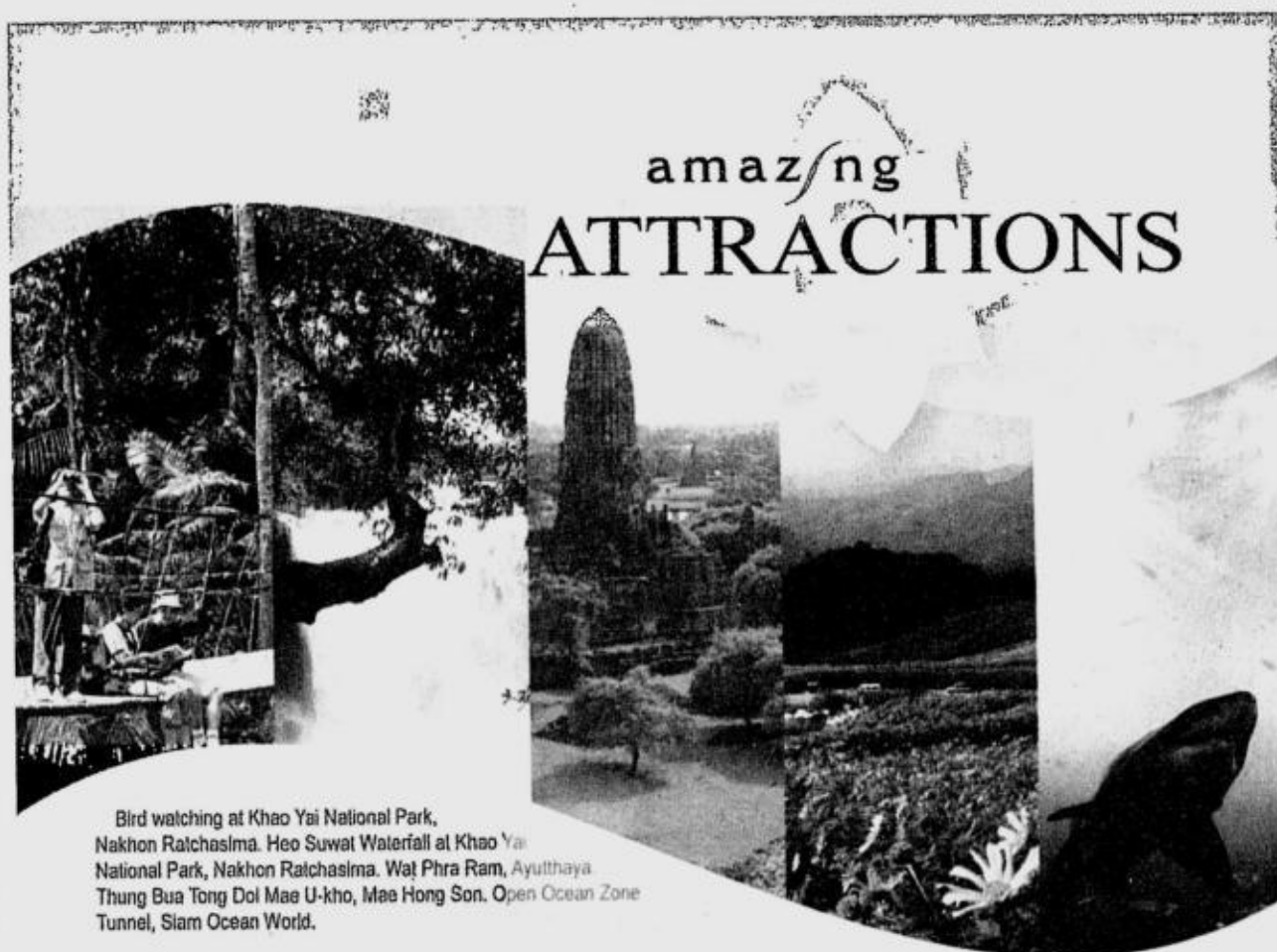
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Buko desserts

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Some studies suggest buko has lauric acid that helps fight yeast, fungi, and other viruses. It has potassium and chloride and low in sodium (tel. 7318886, 7319178 or 0918-9030602).

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ONLY/G3

Ruffa should just stick to issues

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3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
MTRCB PG-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

4 MR. BEAN
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ZODIAC
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ZODIAC
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5:50 / 7:50 / 9:50

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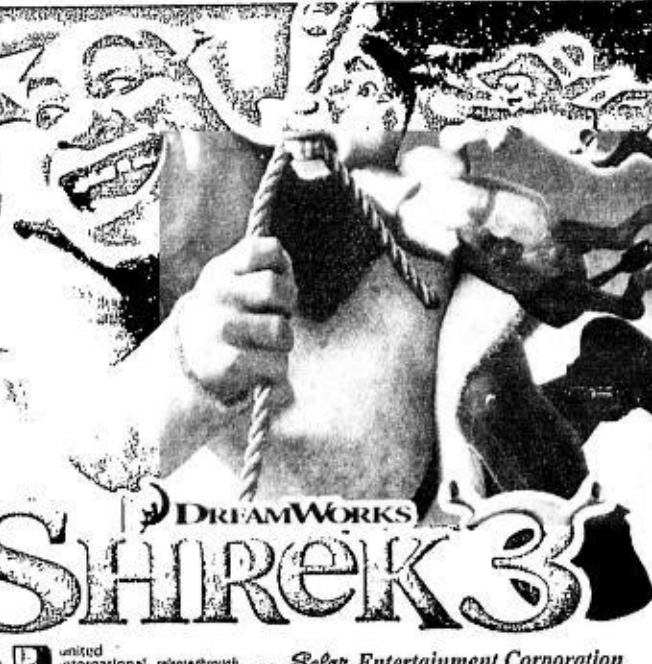
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GALLERIA

Ticket Price THX: P161 131 Indie Sine : 101 832-9118

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3 • THX	6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	7 SHREK 3
3 ZODIAC	8 indieSine: METLOGS
4 FRACTURE	9 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY	10 WHISPER

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Starring: **CHOCOLEYT**
3 young men leave their provinces to try their luck in Metro Manila. They come under the care of Vitarich, an aging gay full of wit and wisdom. Metlogs is a fun film about young men and their survival tactics for the harsh and expensive urban lives they lead.

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1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 ZODIAC	6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3	7 SHREK 3
4 FRACTURE WHISPER	

METRO EAST

Ticket Price: P100 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	5 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 SHREK 3	6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 FRACTURE WHISPER	7 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?
4 SPIDER-MAN 3	8 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

NOVALICHES

Ticket Price: P101 / 91 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3	4 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 SPIDER-MAN 3	5 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3	6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?

PIONEER

Ticket Price: P100 687-5378

1 SHREK 3	3 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
2 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY	4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price: P90 / 80
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LIPA

Ticket Price: (043) 757-3884
P 90 (043) 312-5870

1 SHREK 3	1 SHREK 3
2 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY	2 THE LAST MIMZY
3 LUCKY YOU	3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3	4 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
5 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	5 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?

DASMARINAS

Ticket Price: P90 / 80
(046) 416-4332

ANGELES

Ticket Price: P 90
(045) 892-2348

1 SHREK 3	1 28 WEEKS LATER
2 LUCKY YOU	2 SHREK 3
3 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY	3 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3	4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?
5 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	

IMUS

Ticket Price: P100 (046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8188

STARMILLS

Ticket Price: P90 / 80
(045) 875-1927

1 SHREK 3	1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 FRACTURE	2 SHREK 3
3 PREMONITION	3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY	4 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?
5 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3	5 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	6 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3

BACOLOD

Ticket Price: P20
(034) 441-0459

ILOILO

Ticket Price: P80.50 / 70.50
(033) 338-8070

1 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3	1 SHREK 3
2 SHREK 3	2 FRACTURE
3 RESERVE	3 THE CONDEMNED
4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2	4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2
5 FIREHOUSE DOG	5 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3
6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?	6 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?



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SHANG CINEPLEX

10pm SHREK 3
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2PM PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3pm PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
4pm MR. BEAN

PREMIERE

ZODIAC

CINEMA 2000

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 SHREK THE THIRD

STAR MALL

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 SHREK THE THIRD

metropolis

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 SPIDER-MAN-3
4 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY

THEATRES

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY

PACIFIC MALL

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
4 ZODIAC

Blue Wave

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 SHREK THE THIRD
4 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY

SUPER CINERAMA

1 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
4 ZODIAC

MAJESTIC

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 28 WEEKS LATER
4 RESERVED

Masagana

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
3 28 WEEKS LATER

Center Mall Cinema

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 FIREHOUSE DOG

Jade Cinema

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
4 CONDEMNED

Centre Plaza Cinema

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 SHREK THE THIRD

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 ZODIAC
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
4 MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

1 LUCKY YOU / SPIDER-MAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

1 SPIDER-MAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Cinema 2000 Metrotown

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 SPIDER-MAN-3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3
2 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
3 SHREK THE THIRD

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-3

Lianas Cinema

1 PLEASE CALL
2 SPIDER-MAN-3

Lianas Cinema

1 28 WEEKS LATER
2 PUKOTAN
3 LAST MIMZY
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN

Lianas MovieCity

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
2 OBSESSION
3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
4 NAGDADALAGA
PREMONITION

Fiesta World Mall

1 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
3 FIREHOUSE DOG
4 PLEASE CALL

Berna Cinema

1 PLEASE CALL
2 PLEASE CALL

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



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GUARANTEED SEATS
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1	PAANO KITA IIBIGIN
2	ZODIAC 12:20, 3:10, 11:20 R-13
3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 12:40, 4:10, 11:30 G
4	MR. BEAN'S HOLIDAY 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 G

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WHEN A SERIES OF MURDERS TERRORIZES CALIFORNIA
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S 9 9 A L J A V O 9 0 + + R K O
Q A M + P L T O F P P O X /
9 A R A F J D C C F Y O D P
P + K P O J O U C X G V P L I
P G O J T P O Q N Y P L A
Q C M + B T Z R F B C Y O O K
U + R / O E I P Y B 9 8 T M K O
O C O J R J I T O M + P B F
P O A S Y N O F B O P T A R
J G F N A F O O C V O L + +
Y B X I E O A E > V U Z O + +
I C O P B K P O 9 A 7 M O G O
R O T + L O O C + F J W B I O L
+ + O W C P W O S H T / P O 9
I F X Q W C A D J O S O B D - C O
> M D H N 9 X S Z O A I K E T
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "SE7EN" AND "KILL CLUB"
ZODIAC
BASED ON REAL EVENTS

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POLO RAVELOS
FRANCINE PRIETO
Jealousy, not love, is blind
slip
a
JOEL C. LAMANGAN
film
a
SEIKO Films
presentation
OPENS JUNE 6

AT THE CINEMAS

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SINEMARS (10:30 am - 12:00 pm) / LUCKY YOU
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SHREK 3	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	3 SHREK 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	3 SHREK 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	3 SHREK 3	4 FIREHOUSE DOG
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	2 SHREK 3	3 SPIDER-MAN 3	4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
 Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
 Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
 Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
 Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
 Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA Anson's Exhibit May 15 to 31, 2007	ALABANG TOWN CENTER Strawberry Shortcake & Friends: The Big Berry Bake Off May 18 to 20, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU Toastmasters Info Booth at Paseos May 18 to 20, 2007	MARKET! MARKET! Plyestang Pinoy: Celebrity Recipes Anniversary Party May 16, 2007

GREENBELT
Greenbelt 2 Dinner Theatre presents: Broadway Showstoppers
May 15 & 22, 2007

ONSTAGE
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 For bookings, pls. call 752-7862 or 757-3861

AYALA MUSEUM
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ADVANCE SCREENING of
Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer

FANTASTIC 4
THE SILVER SURFER

In Ayala Malls Cinemas starting June 13

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Plus win Fantastic Four PREMIUM ITEMS!

Pls. see promo banners & leaflets for details
 Promo period: May 25 to June 6, 2007
 Prizeline Draw Date: June 7, 2007

Strawberry Shortcake and Friends
The Big Berry Bake Off
at the Ayala Malls

Alabang Town Center Activity Center May 18-20 11am, 3pm & 6pm	TriNoma Activity Center May 25-27 11am, 3pm & 6pm
Ayala Center Cebu On Stage (Cinema 1) June 1-3 1pm, 4pm & 6:30pm	

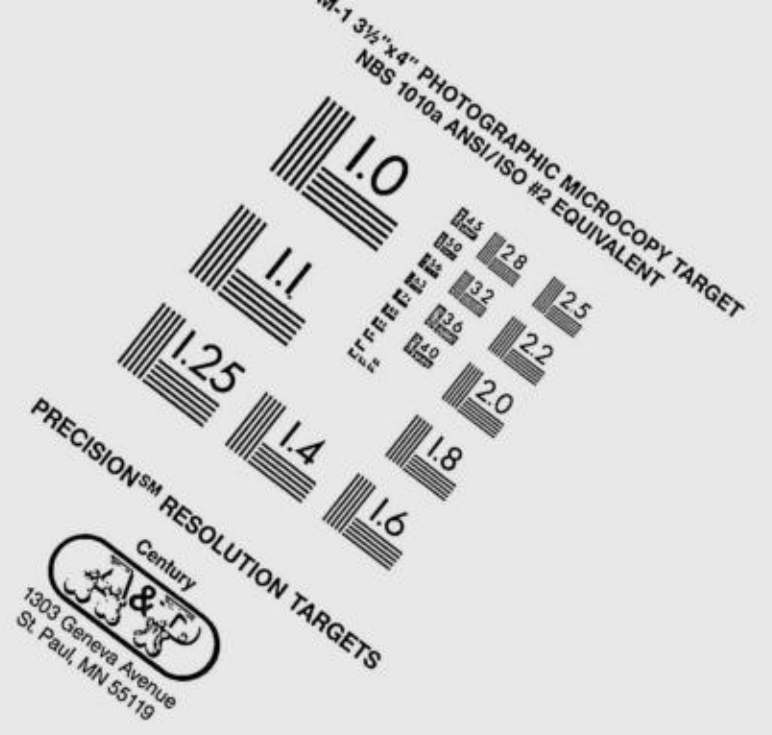
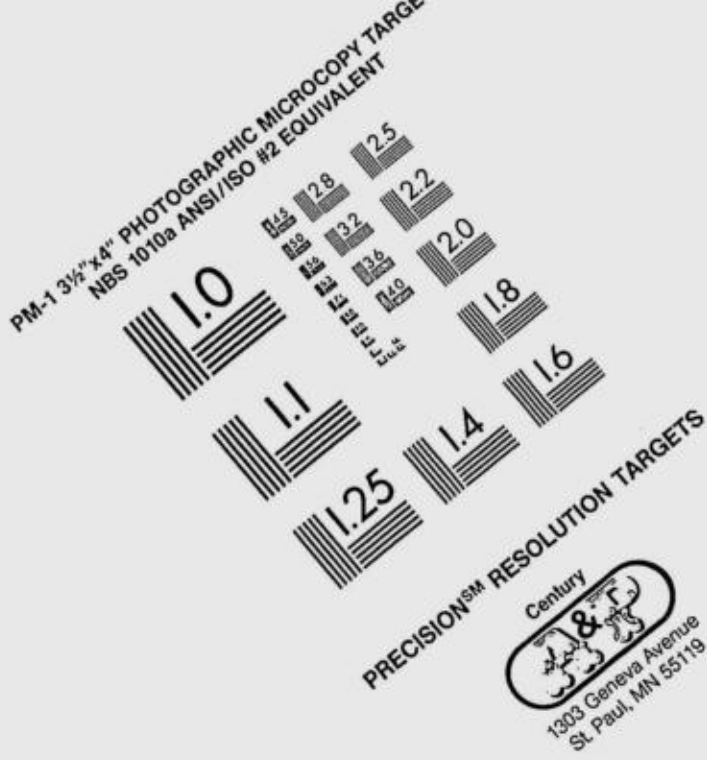
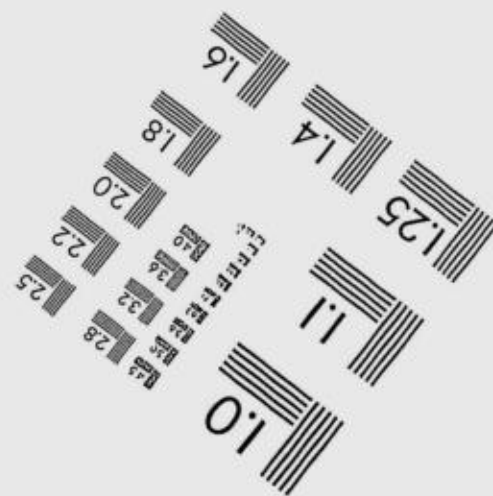
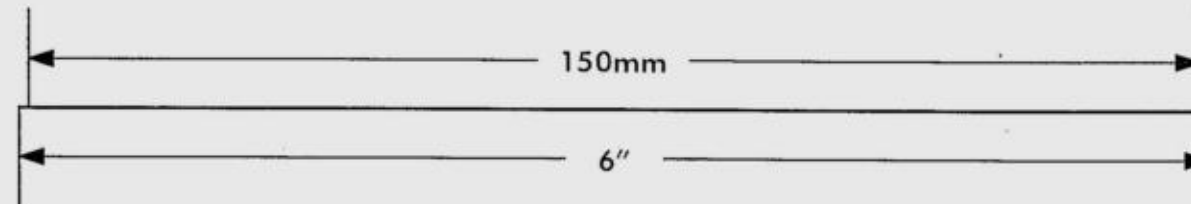
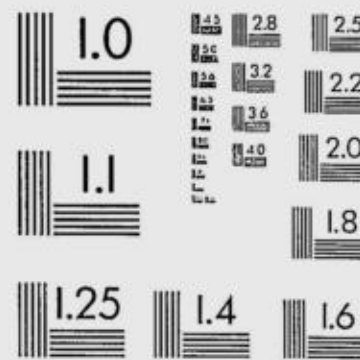
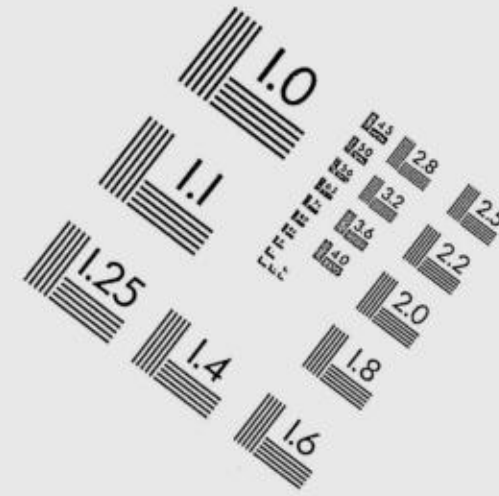
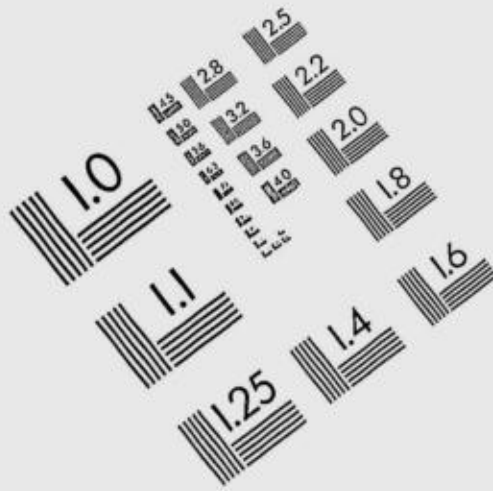
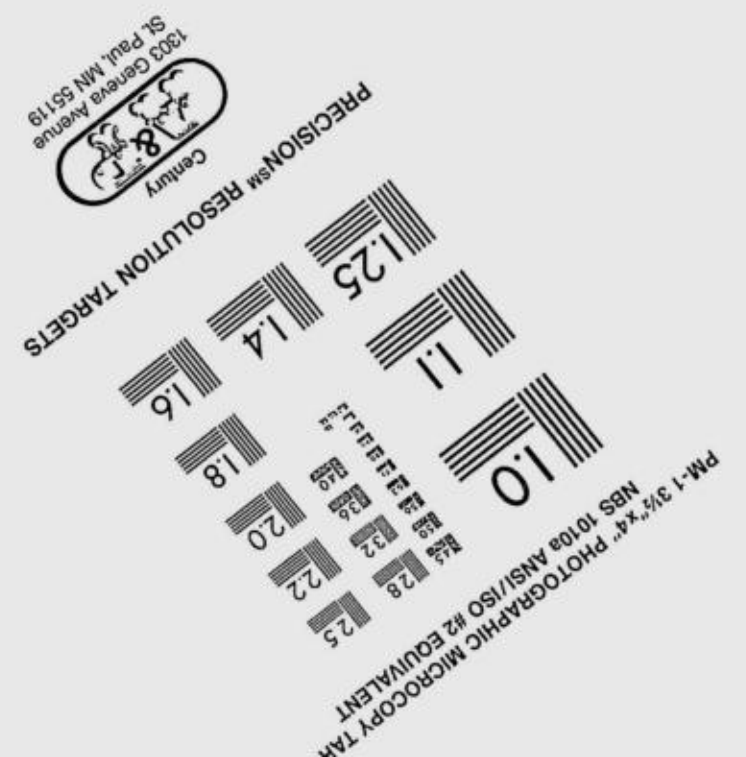
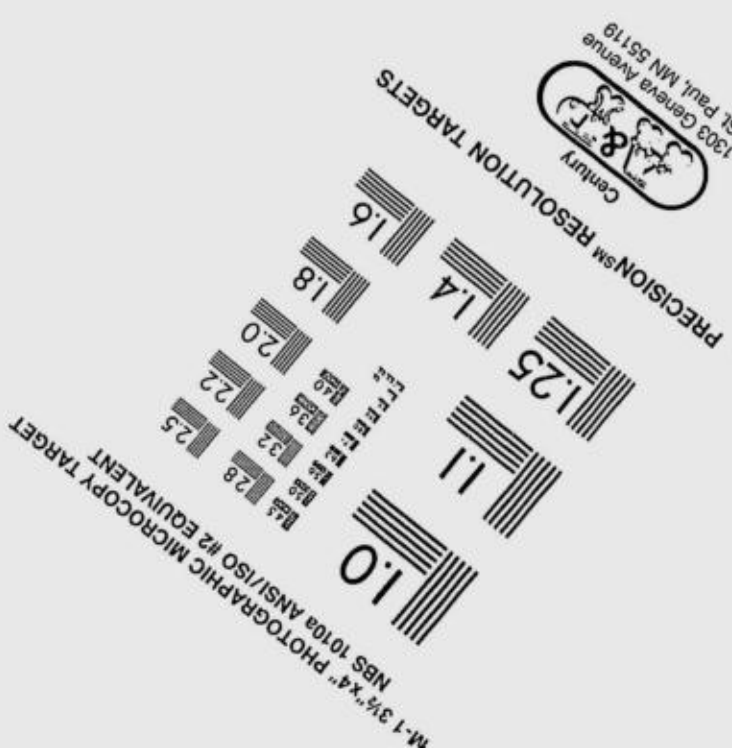
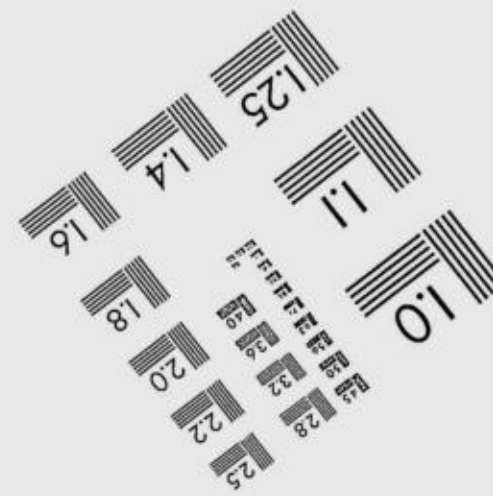


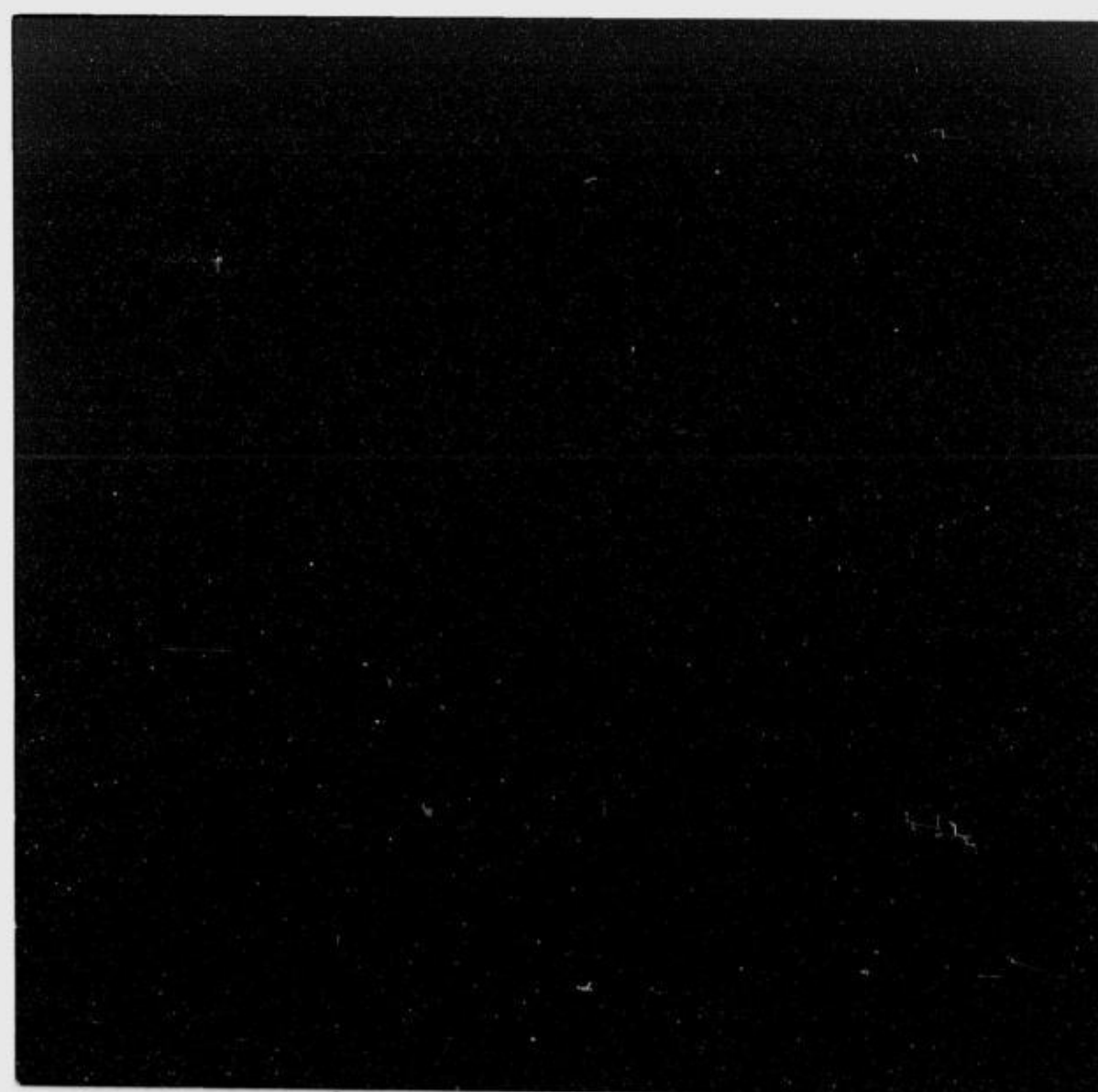
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